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ABSTRACT

This guide to designing an effective second language instructional program in the public schools provides parents, community leaders, and school personnel with practical guidelines for reviewing current foreign language instructional programs and for introducing changes in the curriculum that are in line with the emphasis on communication. An introductory section discusses the main goals and features of an effective foreign language program, student expectations, and the principles of planning for excellence. A section on foreign language learning examines aspects of communication (receptive and productive skills, proficiency, cultural awareness, and global perspectives), proposes an effective instructional sequence, and addresses the role of homework. A section on implementing a foreign language program addresses such issues as presenting an overview, reviewing program philosophy, choosing objectives, selecting languages and materials, establishing short-term instructional objectives, and implementing a new or revised program plan. A fourth section discusses provisions for effective staff development of both individuals and groups, and a final section presents the program evaluation checklist and notes on its use. (MSE)

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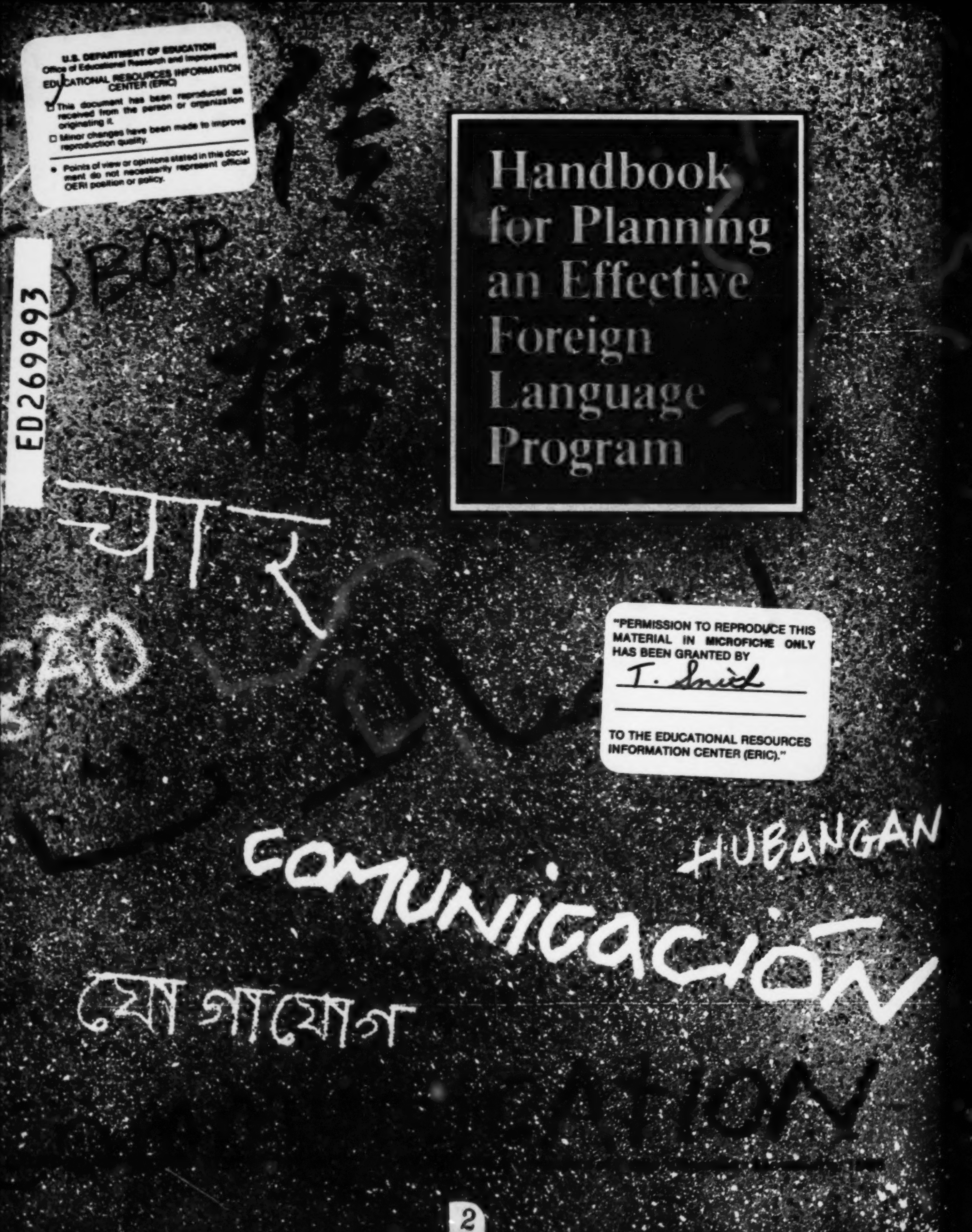
Handbook for Planning an Effective Foreign Language Program



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Handbook for Planning an Effective Foreign Language Program

California State Department of Education

Bill Honig -- Superintendent of Public Instruction
Sacramento, 1985

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Cover Design

The words for *communication* on the cover come from the 12 most commonly spoken languages in the world. English is the second most used language, with 403 million speakers. For a list of the 11 other languages, see page 35.

Photo Credits

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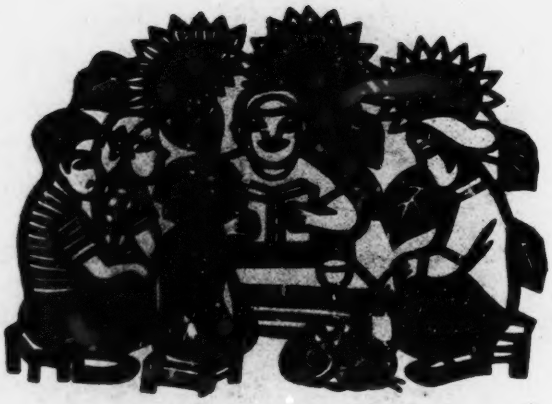

Foreword

Language use is the single most important activity that distinguishes human beings from other animals. Animals can communicate in a primitive way; they can solve simple problems when faced with getting something they need. But only humans have a communication system of sufficient power to develop and transmit ideas and knowledge about institutions and cultures from group to group and from generation to generation. The human race alone has a historical—rather than a merely biological—development. And it is no exaggeration to assert that humanity's survival depends on a wise and accurate development and employment of this uniquely human ability to use language.

The role of education has been to transmit the ideas and knowledge essential to human development; therefore, language study has long been central to education, and foreign language study has been an integral part of the process. Two main reasons for this situation are (1) that we do not all use the same language and education would be unnecessarily limited if we cut ourselves off from those who do not operate in our language; and (2) that we limit our understanding of our own language and its confines if we cannot view it through the perspective of a second language.

California educators have taken several steps recently to ensure that more students learn foreign languages. These steps are delineated in the preface to this handbook. Equally important to this increased emphasis on foreign language study is the recommended shift in instructional focus. Foreign language instruction has traditionally been organized around the study of grammar and vocabulary. Although these components of language are important, they are not viewed as a necessary organizing principle for curriculum or instruction. Attention has shifted to a focus on the act of communication itself—to its purpose, intent, and function. Other aspects of language have a supportive role. This move is logical if proficiency or competency in using a foreign language is to be the prime objective of language learning.

Students do not learn to communicate effectively in *any* language through some indirect process. Our experience with teaching our native language has demonstrated this outcome. Filling in workbooks, learning grammar through drills and exercises, and learning about writing and speaking do not significantly improve students' writing and speaking skills. Students need to concentrate on actually writing and speaking for communicative purposes. The same is true for becoming proficient in a second language.

If the ability to communicate in a foreign language is to be the expected outcome of instruction, changes are in order. Classroom tasks and activities will need to be organized so that students spend much time communicating with each other in small groups. Course outlines will need revision to reflect the primacy of certain acts of communication rather than certain topics of grammar. Textbooks and other learning materials will need adapting or replacing. Most teachers will require additional training.

This handbook is designed to provide assistance to schools and teachers in making this shift. The recommended changes in foreign language instruction are significant, and they are not suggested lightly. They are based on three decades of language training experience in the United States government's institutes for language training, on many years of experience in the Council of Europe, and on recent experiences in many schools and universities throughout our country.

Most California foreign language teachers will accept the challenge to change and grow. Life is a process of change, growth, and adaptation. In Goethe's *Faust* the main character realizes clearly that the essence of life is a constant striving and developing. Cessation of such activity signals a kind of death. Faust's famous wager with Mephistopheles was that if ever he, Faust, should become so satisfied with life that he should say to any passing moment, "Linger a while! Thou art so fair!" the devil could have his soul.

Bill Honig

Superintendent of Public Instruction

Courtesy of Sam Clemens

Preface

This nation is experiencing a growing awareness that learning to communicate in a foreign language is an important component of public education for all Americans. In California this awareness manifests itself in several significant ways:

- The Legislature has mandated one year of foreign language study as an option to meet high school graduation requirements. It has also authorized a study to determine the feasibility of further inclusion of foreign language instruction in the curriculum.
- The State Board of Education has recommended that all high school students complete two years of study in a foreign language.
- The State Department of Education has established a Curriculum Implementation Center for Foreign Languages. The mission of this center is to assist school districts in establishing and improving foreign language programs, including provision of staff development activities for foreign language teachers.
- The State Department of Education has developed several documents intended to provide guidelines for improving foreign language instruction throughout the state. This *Handbook for Planning an Effective Foreign Language Program* is among these Others include:
  - *Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools*
  - "Point of View Statement for Modern Foreign Language Instruction"
  - *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve*

The purpose of this handbook is to provide interested persons—parents and community leaders as well as school personnel—with practical guidelines for reviewing current foreign language instructional programs and program needs. The handbook contains a description of elements that contribute to an effective program. In addition, it offers a checklist that parallels these criteria. The checklist provides an easy-to-use means for assessing the effectiveness of current programs and for determining the need for program additions, program modifications, or for changes in the nature of instruction within individual classrooms.

In setting forth criteria for effective foreign language programs, the handbook is consistent with the point of view contained in other documents produced by the State Department of Education. This point of view consists of three major premises:

- Because learning to communicate is the purpose of foreign language study, communication should be not only a major program objective but also the dominant activity in the foreign language classroom.
- All students at all levels in California public schools should have a variety of foreign language study options.
- School districts should implement a plan that provides a review of current foreign language offerings and that leads to modifications and/or additions that provide students with effective communication-based programs.

By using this handbook, staff from schools and school districts can improve their foreign language programs. In addition, individual teachers can find suggestions for activities that increase students' abilities to communicate. Both of these uses are part of the state's efforts to raise the level of expected student performance and to move students closer and closer to the achievement of excellence—a major goal of public education in this state.

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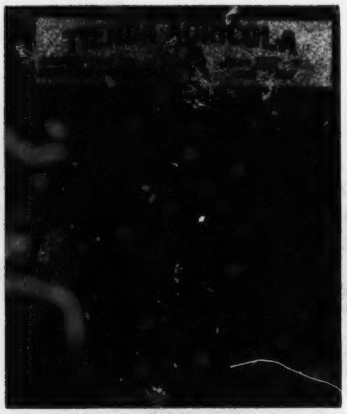

Courtesy of Robert R. Alvarez

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The *Handbook for Planning an Effective Foreign Language Program* was written by Gerald Logan under the direction of Fred Dobb, Manager, Foreign Languages Unit, California State Department of Education, and with assistance from the Foreign Language Handbook Writing Committee. Appreciation is also extended to the reviewers of this handbook and to the staff members from the Office of the Orange County Superintendent of Schools who provided administrative support for this project.

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1 Introducing an Effective Program

A renaissance in foreign language instruction is occurring in California's public schools. This situation is apparent from the provisions for foreign language instruction in the Hughes-Hart Educational Reform Act of 1983 (Senate Bill 813) and from subsequent publications issued by the California State Department of Education in response to that bill, such as the *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve,*[1] and the "Point of View Statement for Modern Foreign Language Instruction."[2] Taken as a whole, the recommendations for foreign language programs in *Raising Expectations: Model Graduation Requirements* and the model curriculum standards set the goals and objectives for such a renaissance.[3] This handbook is designed to specify the steps necessary for realizing these goals and for tapping more fully the potential of California's students for learning foreign languages.

Main Goal of Foreign Language Learning

Joy radiates from the faces of small children discovering for the first time the magic effect of using words. The joy grows as the use of language and the effects of its use on others grow. A renewal of such pleasure is observed in children who are trying to learn a second language. Initially, the children experience exclusion from the society in which the foreign language is used. Before long, however, the newcomers rediscover the old magic in a new set of words and word arrangements and find acceptance.

The joy of language discovery and use should also be evident when the process is taking place in a classroom. The pleasure need not be any less because the learner is older. The conditions present when individuals learned their native language cannot be fully duplicated for learning subsequent languages, of course. But if teachers employ as much as possible of the original process of language learning, then students will feel much of the original excitement. Students do not feel motivated because they expect a subject to be useful in the future or because they anticipate the delayed rewards of knowing a certain subject. The utility and the rewards should be continuous. The joy of foreign language learning should spring from the creative process of communication itself.

The foreign language learning process in the classroom should be based on communication, and it should involve those features that go beyond a mere exchange of language. Although communication is basically the process of transmitting and receiving messages, it incorporates much more if it is to be alive and stimulating. Vital communication includes at least the following features:

- A purpose beyond the mere exercise of language

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[1] *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve,* Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1985.

[2] "Point of View Statement for Modern Foreign Language Instruction." Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1984 (unpublished).

[3] *Raising Expectations: Model Graduation Requirements.* Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1983.

"The accent of one's country dwells in the mind and the heart, as well as on the tongue. (L'accent du pays où l'on est né demeure dans l'esprit et dans le coeur, comme dans le langage.)"

LA ROCHEFOUCAULD,
Maximes, No. 342, 1665.

- A choice of words that are appropriate to the context and that will serve one's purpose at the time of communicating
- Cultural considerations as to both language and social dimensions
- Some personal significance to the speakers
- Some resolution of uncertainties as a result of communicating
- The unexpected and unrehearsed when the mode is conversation (The sequence and the outcome are often unpredictable.)

Communication must be perceived as more than a culminating activity in the learning process. From the start communication in the foreign language should dominate all the stages of language acquisition. Motivation is kept alive when a learner acquires a language by using it. Communication should take place at each stage of learning. *Communication*, therefore, is the vital and constant activity to be included by those planning an effective foreign language program.

The primacy of communication provides a guide and a means for teachers, schools, and districts to assess and to improve their foreign language programs. For this reason employing foreign language as a means of communication in vital and exciting ways will be the continuing thread and measuring stick used throughout this handbook to examine foreign language programs. This approach will be the case whether the subject under consideration be educational philosophy, short-term or long-term objectives, textbook selection, staff development, teaching strategies, classroom organization, or evaluation.

The main goal of foreign language programs in California should be to develop students who can communicate in a foreign language. A student who can do this has the ability to greet others; describe situations; narrate events; convey feelings, wants, and other information; and receive and understand such messages, whether oral or written. Understanding the cultural framework within which the language takes on its full meaning is an integral part of the language learning process.

The degree of communicative competence a student may attain depends on several factors. These include the nature of communicative activities and the amount of time spent using the language. Communicative competence also depends on the effectiveness of other components of the foreign language program, such as textbooks and other learning materials, teacher training, and adequate funding. Therefore, teachers and schools should assess their current practices and revise appropriate aspects of their program as necessary. This handbook can be a helpful guide for accomplishing those tasks.

Main Features of an Effective Foreign Language Program

An effective foreign language program requires the staff to be continuously aware of several considerations:

- The philosophy and purpose of the program should be clear to all concerned.
- The staff should be aware of current

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research and other effective programs in foreign languages.

- Specific goals and objectives should be stated in performance terms.
- Students' most effective learning styles and modalities should be accommodated.
- The staff, the learning materials, and audiovisual equipment should be evaluated periodically according to how well they contribute toward reaching the stated objectives of the program.
- A useful plan for frequent revision or upgrading of the program should be in effect.

Components of a Foreign Language Program

A foreign language program with communication as its main goal implies certain components. They do not result automatically from the program but must be carefully instituted, integrated, and maintained. Descriptions of the components follow:

- Specific needs for communication take precedence over the traditional demands of grammar in a communication-based program. Students learn the appropriate grammar or structural pattern *when needed* for comprehending or conveying messages. The traditional expectation has been that the grammar of the foreign language is learned in the first few courses. Then, if there is time, the students might put the newly learned forms to some practical use.
- Listening comprehension becomes a very important first step in acquiring language skills.
- Students' conversation (in the foreign language) plays an increasingly larger role than has been traditional.
- The dominant language in the classroom, for all communicative purposes, is the foreign language. Use of the student's native language should be minimized and, eventually, eliminated.
- The classroom organization is flexible, accommodating frequent pairing, grouping, and moving about of the students and the teacher.
- The culture of a region, especially in its *current* manifestations, is stressed as an integral part of language learning, permeating all aspects of the process. A language can be fully understood only as an expression of the beliefs, customs, social structures, and so forth of the cultures in which the language is spoken.
- Instruction is set within a global context. By comparing components of the target culture with equivalent aspects in other cultures, students can recognize cross-cultural universals. They can discern the different ways in which various peoples handle such common concerns as the role of family members, the relationship of people to nature and the environment, the organization of society, the importance of education, and so forth.
- Attitudinal objectives receive much attention. Other values and other ways of saying and doing things are presented as being just as acceptable as one's own.

Courtesy of Sam Clemens

- The evaluation of students consists of assessing their communicative abilities in the foreign language. Tests are less likely to be designed for measuring knowledge *about* the language and its grammar.

A foreign language program that properly integrates these components is attainable. However, because a communication-based program involves a complexity of skills, its management requires a raising of standards and expectations. Shifting the emphasis to communication demands that for many foreign language programs, priorities be reordered.

Students' Expectations

A renaissance of foreign language learning in California can occur only with the support of the students. Young people expect immediate gratification. They expect to be able to play the game, however awkwardly, right from the start. They expect to go home at the end of each day or week with the satisfaction that they can actually use the foreign language a little more and a little better than they could previously. They expect the content of language practice to be interesting and significant. When students experience purposeful personal growth, instead of frustration and discouragement, they enjoy learning and want to continue.

Learning a foreign language is analogous to learning to play a musical instrument. As soon as beginning violinists, for example, learn to produce three or four wavering notes, they can play the first simple recognizable melodies and songs. From then on the students constantly play real music as they grow and develop. Some time each day may be spent doing helpful exercises, but the main satisfaction comes from communicating through music, often with peers in various groupings and levels of proficiency. Such students master new keys, notes, rhythms, and harmonies as they go along.

Surveys have shown that students agree that several language functions represent important conversational skills they would like to have in a foreign language, depending, of course, on their age and social maturity. Among these are:

- Socializing—greeting and introducing people, conversing during meals, talking about the weather, getting another person's attention, starting and ending conversations, showing approval, and complimenting others
- Conveying feelings—satisfaction, pleasure, gratitude, hope, surprise, shock, sympathy, regret, grief, dissatisfaction, disappointment, complaints, suspicion, anger, need, preference, bewilderment, fear, worry, or impatience
- Making judgments—expressing rightness, wrongness, approval, disapproval, or appreciation
- Accomplishing things—instructing, advising, persuading, suggesting, promising, inviting, or asking for services
- Getting the facts—asking, reporting, identifying, defining, or correcting
- Responding to facts—seeking, giving permission, doubting, comparing, drawing conclusions, expressing possibility, accepting, declining, classifying, expressing agreement,

> *"Language is ideology. I would say language is culture. Language is my identity. I am my language."*
>
> PAULO FREIRE

expressing disagreement, offering to do something, guessing, or expressing certainty

Planning for Excellence

An effective foreign language program must be planned. As a first step those charged with the responsibility for the language program must agree about where the program is going. Then they can choose or devise appropriate objectives, teaching and learning strategies, materials, staff training, and evaluation instruments.

Planning also involves choosing which languages and levels to offer when a new program is being established and which languages to add when an established program is being expanded. The choice may rest on the students' or community's need or on preference surveys, or a department's philosophy or rationale may determine the selection.

Articulation among the various levels of schools in a system is also a consideration in effective planning. The purpose and method of student and program evaluation must be decided. The role of homework will have a bearing on what is to be accomplished in the classroom. The effective foreign language program integrates all of these features.

Content of This Handbook

What follows this introduction is a detailed account of the various features of an effective foreign language program. The topics introduced previously are expanded and weighed to determine their significance and place in building a better program. Where appropriate, examples of learning activities are given. All suggestions are consistent with the *Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools,*[4] the "Point of View Statement for Modern Foreign Language Instruction," and *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve.*

This handbook is not a complete "how-to-do-it" manual. Rather, it is designed to point out the most important components to be considered by those assessing and improving foreign language programs. A more complete examination of the ideas presented and detailed implementation of any subsequent changes or additions to the local foreign language program will depend on the expertise of teachers, curriculum specialists, and administrators.

Chapter 5 contains a checklist that may be used as a convenient way to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a foreign language program. This checklist may also be used to help one plan a foreign language program where none existed before. The checklist should be supported with information gained through classroom observations; student attitude surveys; teacher, parent, and administrator opinion surveys; a study of course outlines, learning materials, and foreign language tests and test results; and a study of recent writing and research in the field.

The checklist should be used *after* the material preceding it has been read and discussed. Use of the checklist will be most effective if those using it understand the information leading up to it.

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[4] *Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve.* Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1980.

This publication also contains a list of selected references for foreign language educators. In addition, information appears about the Foreign Language Education Series and a "Selected Topical Bibliography of Proficiency-Related Issues," both of which are available from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

Photo by Roy E. Christian

2 Learning Foreign Languages

This chapter contains an examination of what is needed to learn a foreign language—opportunities for communication and an effective instructional sequence. Students need an opportunity to develop receptive skills (listening and reading comprehension) as well as productive skills (speaking and writing capabilities). In addition to developing proficiency (what a learner can do with the language), students become aware of another culture, thereby enhancing their global perspectives. An effective instructional sequence involves setting the stage and providing input, guided practice, evaluation, extension of instruction, and homework assignments. An examination of these components reveals the complex process of learning another language.

Overview of Foreign Language Instruction

An encouraging aspect about foreign language learning is that many students have learned to communicate in the language studied. They acquired the ability to communicate to varying degrees of proficiency. They reached these levels although they were enrolled in programs that employed a great variety of methods and classroom organization options. Identifying the common features in such programs that help develop the ability to communicate in a foreign language is important.

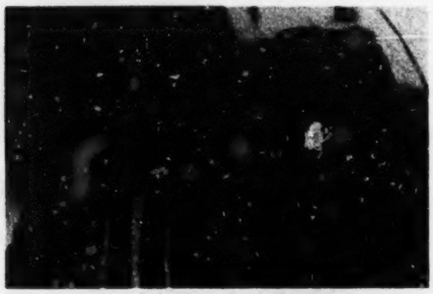
To understand the process of language learning, scholars have analyzed, classified, isolated, ranked, tabulated, and rearranged language components; for example, a sound system or a vocabulary system. A tendency often exists for teachers and textbook writers to emphasize separate components of language, expecting that reassembly into a living, integrated language will take care of itself. Many of the touted teaching techniques reflect this overemphasis on language components.

The purpose of this handbook is not to analyze or evaluate the multitude of labeled methods, approaches, or other competing systems. These many possible components and dimensions of the learning process need not distract teachers and learners from the essentials of learning a foreign language. The important task is to focus on what is, and what is not, communication and on what students actually do when they learn to communicate better.

Aspects of Communication

Students have reached significant levels of communicative competence in programs with many different labels. However, a common denominator exists in all foreign language programs in which students are trained to communicate in the language rather than demonstrate only knowledge *about* the language. Students in such successful programs spend a considerable amount of time communicating. No matter how the language components are introduced, what form drills and exercises take, how much grammar is studied, or what textbook is used, the students spend time receiving and formulating real messages in the foreign language.

This process of communication must be understood and expanded. Other



Courtesy of Maritza Giberga

activities in the foreign language classroom should be evaluated in accordance with their contribution to the efficiency of growth in students' communicative ability.

Certain activities may be considered as communication:

- Interacting extemporaneously in the foreign language to express appropriate greetings, introductions, and pleasantries
- Interacting to fill an information gap between participants
- Playing ad-lib roles in realistic situations
- Initiating language and responding appropriately in real-life situations
- Giving or receiving instructions or explanations
- Using the language as a vehicle for describing situations, expressing needs and feelings, narrating events, teaching someone something, giving opinions, or receiving and comprehending such messages
- Weaving and reweaving, cycling and recycling of newly learned words and idioms in culturally and communicatively authentic contexts
- Writing and reading messages such as those listed previously

Many common classroom activities *do not* provide the opportunity for students to communicate in the foreign language. Nonetheless, these activities may play a contributing role to the process of learning a foreign language. Some of these noncommunicative activities involve:

- Memorizing and reciting dialogues
- Translating
- Performing substitution drills
- Answering questions (with predetermined answers)
- Performing pronunciation exercises
- Writing dictation
- Performing written drills
- Reciting poetry or singing
- Giving explanations in English
- Completing fill-in exercises
- Rearranging sentences
- Performing cloze procedure exercises

Although all of the previously listed activities may have value in foreign language learning, they cannot all be included in the classroom time to be spent on communication. Many teachers believe that these activities serve as preparation or as springboards for practice in communication. Because these noncommunicative activities are easier to plan, create, control, and evaluate than are those involving communication, a danger exists that they will occupy an undue portion of the students' class time. Research shows that students' communicative skills are not helped significantly by studies of grammar and other exercises divorced from the process of communication.[1]

Recent published research results on foreign language learning support the hypothesis that communicative skills develop through intensive communication experience. Language learning is much more than simply forming habits and giving automatic responses. It involves a constantly escalating process of listening and reading for meaning, as structures and messages are being comprehended. After each stage of comprehending, students are ready to speak and

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[1] *Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*. Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1983, p. 3.

"All languages, both learned and mother tongues, be gotten, and gotten only, by imitation. For as ye use to hear, so ye learne to speak...."

ROGER ASCHAM,
The Scholemaster, 1570.

write the kinds of messages previously understood and assimilated.

Many of the drills focused on grammar and other noncommunicative exercises common in foreign language classrooms have undoubtedly served to provide the language comprehension practice referred to previously, even though such exercises were designed for learning grammar. But learning to comprehend language through exercises designed for another purpose is usually inefficient. Students tend to perform such drills mechanically; the content is often not very interesting or vital; and the focus is mainly on form. Above all, little time usually remains for students to develop communication skills when they learn language components and grammatical forms through extensive drills and exercises.

What students *do* in learning or acquiring a foreign language is basically to (1) receive foreign language messages they can understand, as indicated by some responsive activity or feedback, until they are ready to produce similar messages themselves; and (2) produce such messages during planned communicative activities and tasks. This process is neither automatic nor simple. Students' sustained motivation and interest are necessary. Messages of real concern are necessary. The conditions one experiences when desiring to communicate abroad need to be created or simulated. Boredom, high stress, or constant frustration short-circuit the process.

Learning a language is a lifelong process. Near-native proficiency is not likely to be achieved in two to four years, especially when the language is practiced only 50 minutes per day, 180 days per year. Teachers who keep these facts in mind are less likely to allow their own motivation to flag at the first sign of a dip in a steadily climbing student progress chart. Concentrating on the many communicative tasks that students *can* perform is more helpful than focusing on the tasks they cannot yet do. In a communication-based program, clear-cut gains in performance are achieved during each short unit of a course. For example, a teacher might find that a week ago students were not able to discuss the weather; this week, they are able to.

Receptive Skills for Learning Languages

Listening and reading are commonly called receptive skills. Their important role in language learning has always been acknowledged. Learners are unlikely to produce language forms and content that they have never heard or seen. But the emphasis on communicative activities has focused new attention on the importance of instruction in receptive skills. *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve,* contains a detailed presentation of specific receptive skills for secondary students.[2]

Listening comprehension. Current research shows that overall performance in language skills is improved when early concentration on comprehending the language occurs. Much of what is done in the initial phases of a language program is devoted to listening comprehension. Learning techniques similar to those used in the total physical response (TPR) approach are valuable at this stage of learning. TPR activities allow

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[2] *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve*. Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1985, pp. FL-4—FL-6.

"Language is the amber in which a thousand precious and subtle thoughts have been safely imbedded and preserved."

R. C. TRENCH, *The Study of Words: Introductory Lecture*, 1851.

students to indicate understanding without calling for structures they cannot yet produce. Even after the initial phase of a language program, comprehension activities are carried out whenever new material is introduced.

Comprehension activities that lead to language production in communication tasks require more than passive listening. Students must understand the structure, content, and inferences of expressions well enough to produce and use them appropriately later. They also need to respond to the expressions appropriately, either with language or action.

When learning to communicate orally, learners must listen to and comprehend messages until the learners have developed a confident familiarity with the words and forms used to convey the message. This point has been reached when the learners show a readiness to try communicating similar messages. The most frequent type of communication for reaching this point in the classroom is face-to-face interaction, usually between the instructor and the students. The learner has the opportunity to ask for repetition or rephrasing. The instructor can augment the language with facial expressions, posture, gestures, physical performance, visuals, and so forth.

When learners show good comprehension of the types of messages presented, they might try producing similar messages orally; or they might continue with more difficult listening tasks, such as listening to sustained language, without the opportunity to ask for clarification. Here, the learner listens to a short talk or lecture or to a radio announcement or to some other form of electronic media. Other tasks can include listening to messages over a noisy background or from a speaker who is not as articulate as either the teacher or a carefully prepared professional announcer. The learners might perform selective listening tasks in which they are listening for specific information in a lengthy conversation or monologue.

Listening tasks in the classroom include responding physically or with simple language to dialogue content, instructions, questions, narrations, descriptions, anecdotes, media presentations, and personal monologues.

Reading comprehension. The California State Department of Education's *Handbook for Planning an Effective Reading Program* emphasizes three kinds of linguistic information that students must use simultaneously when they read for meaning.[3] The first kind of information is the *symbolic*, the graphic symbols of the alphabet, or whatever graphic representation is used. The processing skills involved are sound and symbol recognition, word recognition, phonetic analysis, and structural analysis.

The second kind of information is *semantic*, the meaning associated with words and phrases. Processing skills incuded here are knowledge of vocabulary and concepts, use of context clues, knowledge of idiomatic expressions, and use of metaphors.

The third kind of information is the *syntactic*, the structure of language. The processing skills require knowledge of grammatical functions, the ordering of words, and sentence patterns.

The teaching task becomes one of helping students use efficiently the three

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[3] *Handbook for Planning an Effective Reading Program.* Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1983, pp. 11—12.

Courtesy of Sam Clemens

kinds of linguistic information in an integrated manner to extract meaning from written language. And since the written language of most cultures goes beyond mere "written talk," instruction in the features unique to written language needs to be part of the instructional objectives.

Reading at beginning levels should be based on language mastered orally by the students, and this procedure should continue until the visual and oral connection is secure. Reading matter should be selected that conveys interesting, relevant, useful, or amusing messages and information in real-life contexts.

Reading tasks in a foreign language include intensive reading for specific, detailed information and extensive reading for general information and meaning. Learners read signs, labels, directions, warnings, notes, menus, letters, stories, novels, newspapers, reports, classical literature, and textbooks. Reading tasks should include work with handwritten material and with stylistic problems involving punctuation, spelling, capitalization, diacritics, and other language-specific graphical issues. (Examples of specific tasks can be found on page 18.)

Productive Skills in Learning Languages

Speaking and writing are the language production skills. The learners perform communication tasks requiring these skills after they can comprehend with ease the types of messages being learned. Alternating activities that focus on comprehension and production may involve short, limited communicative functions and content (e.g., a few sentences) or more extensive portions of language (e.g., a longer conversation or presentation). *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve,* contains a detailed presentation of specific productive skills for secondary students.[4]

Speaking skills. When students appear ready to produce orally new material that they have been practicing as comprehension activities, they should be given the opportunity to try out various elements of it in context (see pages 19—21 for specific examples). Error correction and evaluation for accuracy must not frustrate the student at this point. The student needs opportunities to experiment with the language. Later on, activities can be devoted to improving accuracy and fluency.

Speaking tasks may be organized around common language functions, such as greeting, requesting, giving directions, commanding, complimenting, describing, agreeing, and questioning. Conversations can be further organized around common situations, such as typical communication in a store, restaurant, post office, playground, auto service station, doctor's office, airport, hotel, and so forth. In the classroom students can perform simulation games, tell partners about video or film presentations shown to half the class, take various roles in language survival situations, give instructions, describe things and scenes, tell simple stories, or interview a partner.

Writing skills. Communication through writing consists of such tasks as leaving notes, writing letters, or filling out forms and such school-related activities as taking notes, writing reports, or writing essays and formal papers.

Taking spelling tests and filling in blanks in workbooks are seldom real-life

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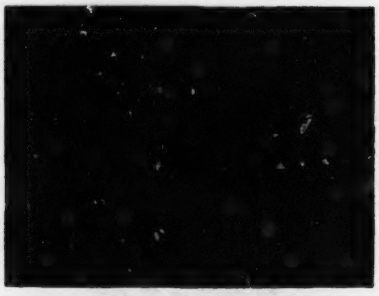
[4] *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve,* pp. FL-11—FL-17.



Courtesy of Carl Cotton

writing tasks. Spelling activities may have a place in establishing symbol-to-sound correspondence or as a prewriting activity; but in general, dealing with spelling problems is more effective when students actually perform meaningful writing tasks.

Writing tasks should be based on topics appropriate to the learners' interests and levels of knowledge. The tasks should also be based on the students' prior oral experiences with the language, at least in beginning stages. Writing should be done with some realistic communicative purpose in mind, and these purposes ought to be as varied as possible. As students advance, they should be given the opportunity to study good models of writing and to try to emulate these models' purpose and style. Students should be taught techniques for monitoring and revising their own writing. This approach will necessitate instruction in the conventions of writing.

Proficiency in Foreign Languages

The main goal in practicing language skills is to develop students' proficiency. Proficiency in a language is determined by what the learners can *do* with the language. Are they able only to satisfy basic survival needs in a limited way? Or are they able to satisfy most survival needs and most social demands with some spontaneity and fluency? Are they more advanced; and can they handle most social situations, including discussions and negotiations, without undue difficulty?

The degree of proficiency is commonly designated by a level. Achievement of a particular level is not determined by how many semesters or years one has studied a language; rather, an assessment of the learner's general performance in the language determines his or her level. Levels are described for listening, speaking, reading, or writing skills and for cultural knowledge. For example, a beginning-level learner can carry out commands nonverbally and can list things when he or she is asked to describe a scene. An intermediate-level learner can begin to construct sentences in a broad variety of functions and situations, can carry out instructions with a variety of verbal responses, and can take the initiative in communicating. An advanced-level learner can control a conversation by directing the other speakers and so forth.

Several organizations have proficiency rating scales. Among these are the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), the California Foreign Language Competency Project, the Interagency Language Roundtable of the United States Government, and the Council of Europe. These scales might serve as guides for curriculum development, staff training, and testing.

Proficiency is not the same as achievement, which involves the learning and mastery of a limited body of material. Most short units of work in foreign language are measured in terms of achievement; for example, learning how to greet properly; understanding a particular story, poem, or song; being able to produce 50 new vocabulary items referring to food; performing several communication tasks requiring the proper use of the various ways of making polite requests; understanding important euphemisms in the language and culture; and learning how to narrate in the past tense.

Report card grades are usually based on how well the tasks cited above are performed. But when the measurement or reporting of a student's general ability to use the language is important, a

"Every language is a temple, in which the soul of those who speak it is enshrined."

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES,
The Professor at the Breakfast-Table, Ch. 2, 1860.

cumulative record of that student's achievement may not reveal the desired information.

Proficiency assessment is not done easily or frequently. The assessor must have the proper training, and the assessment requires a great deal of time with each student. One of the important values of proficiency measurement is for evaluating the effectiveness of the foreign language program or course in general. Are the daily learning activities in the classroom leading to an overall advancement in students' ability to perform in the language? Have the learning activities been of such a nature that students have been able to integrate the many learning tasks into a more extensive application of language functions? A random sampling of students' proficiency levels is often sufficient for evaluating local programs.

Cultural Awareness

Gaining knowledge about the cultural aspects of a language and the people who use it is an inseparable part of the foreign language learning process. A language is a reflection of a culture and, in turn, shapes many of the features of the culture. Culture is commonly equated with patterns for living or the whole pattern of behavior that is shared by a group. Culture includes all the rules for acceptable behavior that are learned by the people who are part of the group or community. It also includes the values and beliefs that the group shares—values that underlie their behavior. *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve,* contains a detailed presentation of cultural awareness for secondary students.[5]

Some of the areas to consider when learning about another culture are the family, stages of human life, interpersonal relationships, communication features, behavior and control of individuals, religion, health and hygiene, food, dress and appearance, history and tradition, holidays and celebrations, education, work and play, concepts of time and space, view of nature, pets and animals, art and music, and future expectations.

When focusing on these and other aspects of culture, the teacher has several objectives in sight. Among these are that students should realize that each culture is unique and constantly evolving and that individuals within each culture vary. Properly presented, these truths about cultures will help most students grow in tolerance and appreciation of individuality, diversity, and contrasts. Students are also brought to the realization that many cultural universals exist. The peoples of the world are linked together by many common concerns.

Global Perspectives

The phrase *international understanding* appears somewhere in almost every school's foreign language philosophy or goals. Such understanding does not occur automatically as a by-product of learning one foreign language and culture. Specific objectives need to be formulated that lead students to develop a global perspective.

Students with a global perspective are aware of the interdependence of all people. They understand the delicate balance of global resources and the subsequent need to use the earth's resources responsibly. They view the world as a system and see beyond national boundaries and language barriers.

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[5] *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve*, pp. FL-18—FL-21.

"Speech is civilization itself. The word, even the most contradictory word, preserves contact—it is silence which isolates."

THOMAS MANN, *The Magic Mountain,* Chapter 6, 1924.

A much more interdependent world is likely to exist in the twenty-first century. Future world citizens will need appropriate global skills and understanding. They will need to be competent in a foreign language and also be capable of operating competently in the larger framework in which the foreign culture and the individual's own native culture are set.

Teachers need to strive toward reaching certain attitudinal goals with their students. These goals include decreasing egocentric and ethnocentric perceptions; decreasing stereotypic perceptions; increasing the ability to empathize; and developing constructive attitudes toward diversity, change, and conflict.

The foreign language learning process offers many opportunities for reaching global perspective objectives. Some of the content of the language tasks can deal with topics of global concern. Some of the situations and the settings for communication practice can involve international events, cultural contrasts, immigration, values and beliefs, geography, and so forth.

An Effective Instructional Sequence for Students

The Effective Classrooms Training (ECT) Program of the California State Department of Education contains five elements in an effective instructional sequence. Instructional practice has shown that students learn best if an instructional and learning process is composed of these elements.

- Element One: Setting the Stage
- Element Two: Providing Input
- Element Three: Providing Guided Practice
- Element Four: Providing Evaluation
- Element Five: Providing Application and Extension of Instruction

The sequence is valid whether one is planning a short learning segment, a class period of instruction, or a unit of instruction lasting several days or weeks. Before considering how the elements might apply to foreign language learning specifically, one should give a more detailed look at some of the activities usually included:

- Element One: Setting the Stage
    - Focus attention; spark interest.
    - State the objective or goal: what the student will learn and be able to do.
    - Establish the purpose: why the the student is learning this material.
    - Tie new concepts to material that students have learned previously.
- Element Two: Providing Input
    - Give a pretest (if appropriate).
    - Identify the students' needs and group the class members accordingly.
    - Provide information and explanations.
    - Present a model or a demonstration.
- Element Three: Providing Guided Practice
    - Direct the students' learning activities.
    - Elicit students' overt responses to demonstrate the attainment of an objective.

Courtesy of Robert R. Alvarez

Monitor the students closely.

Provide specific feedback on students' performances.

Assist students who are having difficulty.

Provide additional information or practice or a change in activities if feedback from students indicates a need.

- Element Four: Providing Evaluation

  Call on students to perform individually the desired behavior.

  Assess each student's degree of attainment of the objective.

- Element Five: Providing Application and Extension of Instruction

  Assign students to groups or individual work.

  Give students creative tasks for employing new skills.

  Allow students to select or design activities according to their interests.

Instructional sequences need not always contain each element. In the learning sequence one element leads naturally into another, and no sharp distinction exists among the elements in practice. For instance, additional learning activities from Element Two, "Providing Input," might be considered appropriate at any stage in the sequence. Feedback and evaluation are constantly occurring. They are not reserved exclusively for some special place in the sequence, although formal types of testing or assessment are likely to occur after students do activities from Element Three, "Providing Guided Practice," and from Element Five, "Providing Application and Extension of Instruction."

Such an instructional sequence is widely accepted as a valid arrangement. For instance, in foreign languages, the Foreign Service Institute (FSI), which prepares U.S. government personnel to function successfully in other countries, has developed one of the most thorough and detailed instructional sequences. Each segment of the FSI learning sequence is clearly recognizable as a subset of one of the five elements of the ECT Program sequence described previously.

In *Teaching Foreign Language Skills,* Wilga M. Rivers presents an instructional plan that also clearly parallels the ECT Program sequence.[6] Dr. Rivers begins with a warm-up (setting the stage), proceeds to new work (providing input), then to oral exercises (providing guided practice), followed by an evaluation (providing evaluation), and then a practical application (providing application and extension). She then continues with preparation for homework and, finally, an additional relaxing and enjoyable activity to end the session, such as a game or a song.

The application and extension element usually includes many small-group activities. Students may be working as individuals, pairs, or small groups. Activities may include interviewing, simulation tasks, cultural tasks, peer teaching and/or evaluation, practice on a computer, listening comprehension for a special

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[6] Wilga M. Rivers, *Teaching Foreign Language Skills.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968.

Courtesy of Sam Clemens

purpose, or even review activities for some students.

Difficulties in planning and carrying out such small-group tasks include providing interesting content, maintaining student control, building a feeling of real communication in the learning tasks, and evaluating the students' progress and outcome. These difficulties have caused most teachers in the past to organize the instruction mainly around activities for the entire class. Teachers were often satisfied if students understood a great deal of the language and had learned its grammar and other components well. They often left the development of two-way oral communication for later, after the student had left the classroom and might need to use the language.

The five elements need to be related to foreign language instruction in some detail. During any of these stages of instruction, keeping the students actively engaged is important. Also, one should not stay on any one activity or type of task so long that loss of interest or boredom occurs.

Element One: Setting the Stage

Without motivation, little learning takes place. Students usually want to learn if they perceive that the skill or concept to be learned is interesting, relevant, desirable, or useful.

Many teachers find that they do not need to set the stage in any special way. The classroom environment, the teaching and learning process itself, and emphasis on the target language and culture with which the teacher infuses all classroom activities are sufficient motivation for the students.

Other teachers prefer to begin an instructional sequence with a more pronounced prologue. They want to prepare the students in advance for what is to come in the learning process and why it is coming.

Examples of activities for setting the stage are:

- The following may be presented to students in the language they are studying: a short, stimulating film clip, videotape, skit, slide-sound series, cartoon, picture, or magazine advertisement. The students are told that by the end of the lesson they will be able to understand what is going on, and they will also be able to express themselves in a similar situation in the foreign language.
- Students are given the objective directly: "By the end of this lesson, you will be able to express your suspicions about someone's actions in four ways."
- A situation is outlined orally to which students will want to respond. They are told that the lesson is designed to enable them to do this.
- Students are provided with a short rationale for what they will be doing.
- Students are presented with several communication problems they are not yet capable of solving. The problems are discussed, and the students choose which one they want to be able to solve first.
- A communication problem that arose in a previous lesson is discussed and becomes the objective of the new lesson.
- A lesson plan or agenda is posted on the board each day.
- The visual impact of the room is used to arouse interest in the foreign language and to provide further

> ***"What a great language I have; it's a fine language we inherited from the fierce conquistadors . . . They carried off and left us everything . . . They left us the words."***
>
> PABLO NERUDA, *Confieso Que He Vivido*, Chapter 2, 1974.

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opportunity for students to experience authentic language and cultural images.

- Social studies teachers and native speakers of the foreign language are invited to speak, answer questions, and show visuals.

Element Two: Providing Input

In a communication-based foreign language program, the input phase of instruction consists mainly of comprehension activities (see "Receptive Skills for Learning Languages," page 9). Students perform listening or reading tasks that help them internalize the language. Three major aspects of the language to learn are vocabulary (words, phrases, idioms, and so forth); ways of expressing common, widely applicable language functions (requesting, apologizing, showing anger, complimenting, and so forth); and cultural dimensions (taboo words, euphemisms, culture-specific connotations, and so forth).

Learning the common language functions requires the most time and effort. To be able to comprehend various functions in a wide variety of situations, the learner must respond appropriately to the grammatical structures and syntax involved. Other important language features may exist, depending on the language being learned. Students can learn to comprehend a wide range of functions and content more quickly than they can learn to produce the same range of language. Therefore, students' understanding of the language is always ahead of the ability to produce the language. If explanations concerning the content, culture, or structure are deemed necessary, they are considered as part of Element Two.

If the student group is heterogeneous in its foreign language background, part of the input stage may consist of a pretest. The results may prompt the teacher to divide the students into two or more groups for the duration of the lesson. In this case the teacher must be capable of managing small-group structure in the classroom.

Examples of activities for listening comprehension are as follows:

- Students listen to a segment of the foreign language for general comprehension. To assess comprehension, the teacher presents a short sequel. The students decide whether the sequence is logical or not by nodding to indicate yes or no.
- Students listen to messages in the foreign language that require them to respond in a physical way: "Stand up." "Wave to your partner." "Turn around if you are a girl."
- Students listen to messages that require oral language responses using previously well-learned material.
- Students view a picture and listen to a description. They indicate whether the description was accurate or not.
- Students listen to a definition. From a list they choose the word being defined.
- Students hear a message in the foreign language. They answer questions designed to assess their comprehension (perhaps in multiple-choice format). If necessary, a repeat performance or a clarification follows.
- Students listen to a foreign language segment. At the same time they are presented with visual images of

Courtesy of Claire Quinlan

things, actions, functions, and expressions of emotion to aid concentration, comprehension, and memory through association.

- The teacher participates with students in an activity, such as making a kite or preparing a lunch. The teacher describes what is taking place and frequently checks the students' responses, nonverbal as well as verbal, to ensure that the language being used is comprehended.

Examples of activities for reading comprehension are:

- Students point to words, phrases, or sentences read by the teacher.
- Students can read aloud spelled-out numbers, street signs and other signs, months, days, or names of common store merchandise to help establish initial symbol-to-sound correspondence.
- From pictures or slides students read signs that are written in the language they are studying. Calendars may also be used.
- Students read connected passages aloud. This activity can help the teacher to ascertain whether the visual cues are serving to trigger a student's understanding of real language or merely the pronunciation of words.
- Students scan or search through written material for requested information.
- Students read messages on charts or shown by an overhead projector. Students must then summarize or answer questions, either in English or in the foreign language, depending on the students' level.
- Students read passages and then answer multiple-choice questions for a quick assessment of their comprehension and to pinpoint difficulties.
- Students take brief notes in the foreign language while reading. They use the notes to answer questions, to write or give orally a summary of the content, or to recompose the original material in as much detail as possible.
- Students translate messages from the language they are studying into their native language. This activity might be used to check intensive reading at beginning levels, but it should be used sparingly.

Element Three: Providing Guided Practice

One theory behind guided practice in foreign language is that controlled processes lead to accurate performance. This performance then becomes automatic after a while, demanding less attention and allowing the student to focus on content rather than on form. The students' spoken language will then become more fluent. Comparisons are often made with the stages involved in learning to type, drive a car, dance, or play most sports. However, experience with audio-lingual approaches indicates that effective practice needs to be more clearly understood and applied. When students are internalizing the skills necessary to type or drive, they are actually typing or driving. When students are learning to speak in another language, their practice should consist mainly of communication.

Many theorists now think that the guided practice step is not necessary in

> *"Language is a city to the building of which every human being brought a stone."*
>
> RALPH WALDO EMERSON, *Letters and Social Aims: Quotation and Originality*, 1876.

foreign language learning, at least not guided practice in the form of drills and exercises. They maintain that a sufficient variety and quantity of meaningful language study will activate a language acquisition center in the brain and that production will then follow. Therefore, guided practice should consist of closely supervised communication tasks.

Since guided practice in foreign language typically has consisted of drills designed to elicit language containing the form or content being learned, teachers who find value in this type of exercise should take care to ensure that any such drills resemble communication activities as much as possible and that such practice leads to communication tasks as quickly as possible. Monitoring student response is an important feature of guided practice. The monitor guides the practice according to the feedback received from the students' performance. The result may prompt the teacher to give assistance to those having difficulty, to provide information and explanation to some or all students, to change the activity or pace, and to change the focus of communciation caused by unanticipated difficulties with the production of language.

As always, the impact of practice is greater if the language being rehearsed consists of realistic, relevant, interesting, and obviously useful portions of language. A danger exists that guided practice consisting of drills will occupy too large a proportion of the learning time in the classroom. Drill activity is not usually communication practice, but this activity is frequently a precommunication phase.

Teachers who introduce new material through drills in a program stressing communication have found the following sequence to be helpful:

- Mechanical exercise ("One book, two books, three books," and so forth)
- Meaningful exercise ("How many books are on the table?" "Three.")
- Communicative exercise ("How many books are in your backpack?")

Such exercises are organized around a theme or a useful situation. They are also personalized as much as possible. Most important, they are designed to lead to communication tasks as quickly as possible, and a maximum amount of time is then spent having the students communicate with the new material. Examples of oral communication activities for guided practice are:

- Students name the articles of clothing of a suspicious person who appeared briefly in the room (or in a picture or projected image). The teacher or a student writes a list on the chalkboard.
- Students describe a scene, using short phrases or sentences. The teacher or a student writes down each description when everyone agrees that it is correct. Students work with partners, trying to describe the whole scene in a connected sequence, employing whatever structures they have mastered.
- Students bring to class pictures representing a region where they would like to live. The teacher posts several of the pictures. During the input stages the teacher describes the areas, using short phrases and making certain that the students understand.

"Accent is the soul of a language; it gives the feeling and truth to it. (L'accent est l'âme du discours, il lui donne le sentiment et la vérité.)"

ROUSSEAU, *Emile*, Book i, 1762.

The teacher then directs students to place themselves near the picture of the area they prefer. The students must justify their choices using five or six words or phrases. The students then list the attractions of the area on pieces of butcher paper posted near each picture. The teacher might then direct the students to give several reasons orally and in writing for *not* choosing particular areas.

- Students role-play in basic situations involving the greeting of others, asking and telling time, or describing the weather. Cue cards or pictures may be used to stimulate likely expressions.
- Students view short films, video presentations, or skits; they narrate or tell a partner afterwards of the sequence of events.
- The teacher directs a student to carry out briefly a familiar activity, such as going over and shutting the window, going to the chalkboard and writing something, sharpening a pencil, or looking up a word in the class dictionary. Everyone can easily remember and recall every activity in the sequence (e.g., for going to the chalkboard, the sequence is standing up, walking to the board, picking up the chalk, writing, perhaps erasing, putting down the chalk, turning around, walking back, or sitting down). The class, or individuals, are then asked what the student did first, what next, and so forth. The questioning and responding can be arranged so that the students are required to use particular tenses and subject pronouns to express concepts.
- The teacher is on the phone informing someone (for example, a police officer) what a third party is doing. The teacher cannot see the third party, but the class can. This unseen person has a script telling him or her to carry out a certain series of activities alone, with a partner, or with props. The teacher asks such questions as, "What is he doing now?" "Where is he going?" "What is he holding?" "What did he just do?" The range of questions will be determined by the kind of previous discussion and practice. The class, or individuals, respond. The teacher passes on the information over the phone.
- The teacher identifies an art student in the class and sends him or her to the board or to a large piece of paper to serve as a police artist. The teacher selects a second student as the suspect whose identity is known to the class but not to the artist. The teacher asks questions about various facial features. Individuals answer and the artist sketches. Students may volunteer information or attempt to correct distortions or deficiencies. Depending on the students' proficiency, the language level can be very simple or quite sophisticated.
- The teacher and students can communicate about previously presented material such as a dialogue, a narration, a demonstration on how to do something, a first-person account, a film, a slide/tape presentation, and so forth. The teacher can ask the class to retell the events, if appropriate, by pointing to various students in turn to relate the next activity, bit of information, or description. Students are allowed to

Courtesy of Sam Clemens

correct each other if major errors occur. The teacher might focus more directly on specific elements by asking, in the foreign language, such questions as, "How did the first person greet the second person?" "How did the customer express his or her anger?" In these and many other ways, the students can try out their productive expertise with the content being learned and the language functions. The teacher can judge whether the students have sufficiently internalized the language and are ready to go on and use the material in more independent ways.

- Students choose a controversial topic from a posted list. They identify their position on the issue by going to a designated area in the room. The teacher lists pros and cons on the board and explains each. Students select two or three of the positions that support their view. They prepare themselves to use the reasons by listening to them several times and practicing saying them. In small groups they prepare a position statement. Students present their position orally to the class, another group, or the teacher.
- Students are directed in the foreign language to carry out specific tasks in the foreign language; for example, "How would you ask the way to the nearest restroom?" "How would you express anger to your friends about their behavior yesterday?" "How would you express a wish for a hamburger?" "How would a second person inform you that there is no such thing in this town?"
- Students as a group compose an advertisement, a sequence of instructions for teaching someone to do something, a list of questions they want to ask a guest, a skit emphasizing a cultural difference, and so forth. The individual contributions are oral. The teacher might write them on the board, or all students might write them down as they are given.

Even pronunciation is best learned through communication tasks. Individual words or sounds should be practiced only when students' difficulty in pronouncing them is detected. Isolated phoneme practice should be necessary only when the physical difficulty students have in forming the sound is evident.

Examples of activities for writing are as follows:

- Students copy written material from the chalkboard or textbook.
- Students make a list of items to get at the store. Words can be chosen to highlight particular sound-to-symbol problems.
- Students make a written inventory list of items in a room, box, closet, or drawer. Actual items, pictures of items, pictures of the entire scene, or pictures cut out of catalogues can be used. Items can be picked that represent words with the sounds that the students need to practice.
- Students transcribe oral material with which they have been working.
- Students write down the names of checked items pictured in a catalogue in preparation for ordering.
- Students do crossword puzzles, using cues that require words containing the desired letters.
- Students list all the foreign language words they can think of that they

Ολυμπία
Olympia

Courtesy of Sam Clemens

believe contain the symbols or sounds being practiced. The lists are compared and discussed.

- Students take notes on the main points in messages presented orally. The notes are then checked for content and for accuracy in writing.

Examples of activities for developing cultural awareness are:

- Students practice the behavior and gestures common during greeting, introducing, and leave-taking.
- Students learn any culture-bound taboos. They might produce skits featuring the innocent, unwitting tourist who does all the wrong things.
- Students are given language tasks that also require the employment of common rules of etiquette. The rules may be associated with serving and eating food, wearing appropriate clothing, making requests, using facilities, tipping, refusing something, giving gifts, telephoning, entering a home, buying and bargaining, banking, and so forth.
- Students are made aware of the cultural connotations of certain words, especially if embarrassment or offense might result.
- Students are given language tasks to build up some sense of culture-related humor.
- Students practice and become sensitive to nonverbal responses and reactions. The teacher might model unique expressions of anger, disgust, disagreement, shock, refusal, threat, friendliness, and so forth.
- Students practice exhibiting appropriate informal and formal modes of behavior.
- Students are given language tasks with settings that highlight target culture features in many of the areas listed in "Aspects of Communication," page 7.

Element Four: Providing Evaluation

Students need to be evaluated in some manner to determine whether the objectives of a lesson have been adequately achieved. Students cannot apply, use, or extend skills that they do not possess to some degree. Assessment does not have to be formal testing in the usual sense. In fact, the evaluation may be an integrated, ongoing feature of elements two and three.

Unfortunately, many foreign language programs indicate an end to the lesson after this first assessment phase. But for a communication-based program of foreign language, the next phase is most important. The first four elements are stages leading toward the final goal, which is creative and spontaneous use of the language.

There is no mystery to testing students. If the objectives are stated clearly and in terms of performance, the evaluation phase merely assesses whether the student can actually do, or not do, that which was expected. If the student cannot perform as expected, additional practice with different approaches, or perhaps more language input, should be prescribed. If students can perform as expected, they are ready to apply the new skills in more open-ended, creative, useful, and exciting ways and to develop fluency and flexibility.

Evaluating oral production must be done on a one-to-one basis or with a cassette or tape recording. Testing a student's reading, writing, and listening

> ***"They spell it Vinci and pronounce it Vinchy; foreigners always spell better than they pronounce."***
>
> MARK TWAIN, *The Innocents Abroad*, Chaper 19, 1869.

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comprehension performance can be done effectively with paper and pencil. But a written test does not properly assess a student's oral performance.

Element Five: Providing Application and Extension of Instruction

The main goal of foreign language instruction should normally be to develop students who can communicate information freely in the target language. The goal of Element Five in the instructional sequence is to provide students with ample opportunities to practice this skill. The development of communication skills is not a simple task, but it is absolutely necessary; and it can be the most exciting, enjoyable, and rewarding phase of the instruction and learning process.

Foreign language teachers also expect to realize certain by-products, or secondary goals. Teachers want students to leave each lesson convinced that they have made significant progress in dealing with everyday life situations in the language. Teachers should instill in students an awareness that the functions practiced are independent of specific content and can be used in an unlimited number of situations. Teachers must help students realize clearly that a specific language operates within a specific set of values, beliefs, and practices. Students will overcome their ethnocentrism and avoid miscommunication only if specific cultural phenomena are intregrated into the models and practice materials.

Teachers often find it difficult to provide students with sufficient authentic material for meaningful communication practice in a sequence of increasing complexity and difficulty. New textbooks are being written to provide these kinds of exercises. Schools, school districts, and offices of county superintendents of schools have a special obligation in this area. The entire foreign language staff should create materials, ideas, and techniques. This approach will preclude the necessity for each teacher to duplicate the work of the others unnecessarily.

Managing small-group activities in the classroom presents a second problem. Teachers who have operated individualized programs are familiar with the techniques, and they can serve as a valuable resource. When the class is organized for small-group activities, some students may be engaged in review work, either individually or in a small group. Other students may be carrying out conversational tasks in pairs or in small groups. Some students may be learning, practicing, or conversing, using materials for special purposes in the language being learned. Such materials can include language used for scientific purposes, careers, travel, or health or social services. Still other students may be making up missed lessons.

If confusion during small-group periods is to be avoided, care should be taken to ensure that:

- The objectives are precisely stated.
- The directions for the learning tasks are clear and complete. The safest way to ensure this is to include directions in printed or recorded form with the materials that students will use.
- Any supplementary materials called for should be readily accessible: tapes, cassettes, films, filmstrips, video components, books, magazines, charts, maps, pictures, realia, and handouts.

During periods of small-group classroom organization, the teacher should move about the room. Students should be monitored to ensure that all individuals or groups are on task and are progressing. Students should be held accountable for attaining the objectives and for their behavior. The teacher should be available to help or to evaluate a group or an individual.

The general rule for planning activities for realistic communication is to build in some sort of interesting or relevant information gap that students must close by making use of the language. Students will have learned and practiced the essential functions and vocabulary in advance. (Instructional sequence elements one through four, as described in this chapter, are involved.) Cultural characteristics should always be included and emphasized wherever possible.

The level at which any of the following activities can be done by students varies, depending on the individual's background and language preparation. Many of the tasks could be done at several levels of difficulty and sophistication. In general the tasks proceed from elementary to advanced levels. The content can be adjusted, or adapted, for elementary school students. Examples of these activities for application and extension are as follows:

- Students in pairs or small groups of three or four are given cards that provide briefly a communication task. Examples of such cards are:

  > You meet on the street on a rainy, windy morning. You greet, exchange pleasantries, comment on the weather, and take leave.
  >
  > You are at a party (birthday or otherwise). Introduce yourselves, establish basic information about each other, and find out each other's favorite activities. One of you likes cars (or whatever) and invites the other to examine the car and to take a ride. You set a time and place and then take leave.
  >
  > One student is a customer and another is a clerk in a clothing store. Both greet each other; the clerk offers help; the customer wants a shirt; both determine the size, price, color, and so forth. The customer buys the shirt, pays, and takes leave.

  Other locations for communication tasks might be an airport, a railroad station, a restaurant, a service station, a car rental agency, a family dining room, a theater, a youth hostel, a grocery store, a hotel, a laundry, an employment office, a farm, a school, a playground, a post office, or a host's home. Other examples include being outdoors in various kinds of weather, on a city street, in a doctor's office, in a hospital, in a repair shop, in specialty stores, or in any place involving a situation highlighting a cultural difference.

- Students are given cards or handouts with instructions in the target language for tasks involving getting and giving extended amounts of information. Examples are:

  > One set of cards has pictures or simple drawings. Matching cards have questions indicated in shortened form, such as, "What/see/lower/left? Is there . . . ? Where/telephone booth? What/behind/house/?" The first student asks the second student

Courtesy of Sam Clemens

questions and is urged to begin questions with learned, commonly used sentence openers, such as, "Can you tell me where/what . . . ? Do you know where/what . . . ? Is it possible that . . . ? Would you be kind enough to tell me . . . ?"

The second student answers explicitly enough so that the first student can recreate the picture on paper as the questioning progresses. Finally, the pictures are compared, and errors or differences are discussed—in the foreign language, of course. The students then go on to the next card and reverse roles.

Students' interest may be heightened by a classroom simulation of a courtroom trial, with questions being asked to recreate the scene of a crime; a telephone conversation to determine whether the caller has found the right location; the scene of an accident; a rescue team trying to get an accurate picture of a search area from the crew of a reconnaissance plane; or the stage setting for a play.

- Students carry out the instructions on cards or handouts containing directed dialogue in the foreign language. Examples are:

  Student number one greets a second student in the afternoon.

  The second student responds properly.

  Student number one asks the second student what he or she is doing here in the radio and television store.

  The second student replies that he or she needs some blank cassette tapes.

  Number one wants to know what the second student is going to use them for.

  The second student says that he or she wants to record the latest song hits of . . . and so forth.

- Students interview each other, finding out all they can, to form a profile or minibiography. Students may be given a questionnaire to use, or they may be directed to prepare their own beforehand. As a follow-up activity, students could write up the profile as a newspaper article, or they could prepare an oral report for radio or television.
- Students participate in a show-and-tell session. They are directed to bring in objects and to describe them to their partner, a small group, or the entire class. Students might keep the object in a box while describing it. The others then draw a sketch of what they think it looks like. Questions can be asked and answered. The object is then revealed. Comparisons and a discussion follow.
- Students in elementary school practice giving and receiving instructions. Students work in pairs and sit back to back; or they might work separately and use toy phones, two-way radios, or computers. Both students have identical sets of building blocks, construction paper, drawing or painting materials, toy models of a farmyard, airport, train station, store, house , and so forth. One student begins to build, draw, rearrange, remove, color, circle, or cross out things. He or she tells the other what to do. The other follows the directions. They then compare and discuss the results.

Courtesy of Sam [illegible]

- Students practice giving and receiving directions. The arrangement of students is similar to that given previously. Each student has a city map. An object is moved about step-by-step. Both students should finish at the same place. One partner can direct several moves; then the other has a turn, or each partner can command one move in alternating sequence.
- Students participate in role-playing. An action picture containing people (or even animals) in a target culture setting provides the stimulus. Students (two or more) are assigned or choose to be people in the picture. They then ad-lib an appropriate scenario, continuing for some specified length of time.
- Students engage in long-term projects for a few minutes each day. Such projects might be done as a whole-class activity, a small-group activity, or in pairs. The established procedures should ensure maximum communication: "What do I do next?" "Is this the correct way?" "How do you think that looks?" "What does this part do?" "I will explain exactly how I am doing this."
- Other examples of long-term projects might include building models, repairing a bicycle, doing crafts, publishing a class newspaper or magazine, training a dog, demonstrating or carrying out a science project, programming a computer, or writing a class diary. The project might even consist of teaching and learning another subject in the foreign language. A unit on the solar system, world geography, stamp and coin collecting, world trade, mathematics, social studies, or physical fitness might be chosen. Depending on the level of student proficiency, some amount of prior activity and practice may have to precede each stage of the project.
- Students participate in transitional activities in preparation for open-ended conversation. Retelling of stories, events, television programs, or movie plots are possibilities. Students can begin by greeting, exchanging pleasantries, asking what is new, and then telling each other what they did or observed recently. The narrator may be interrupted with questions or comments. The students decide in advance what they are going to tell about and do some preparation with vocabulary.
- Students carry out a variation of the retelling technique. The teacher may have stories, short films, cassettes, videotapes, or recorded fairy tales on hand that limit structures and vocabulary to the students' present ability to handle them (they can be edited). The conversation partners do not view, hear, or read the same presentation if the retelling is designed to test the partner's comprehension.
- Students engage in open-ended conversation. Situations are suggested where participants need to express emotion, judgmental opinions, authority, positive and negative reactions, and so forth. An example is as follows:

> Students operate in pairs, taking the role of two roommates. The first

"Language is the dress of thought."

SAMUEL JOHNSON, *Lives of the Poets: Cowley*, 1781.

> has received a scholarship to a school many miles away and will be leaving next week. During the conversation, the second roommate runs the gamut of emotions from shock, pleasure, reminiscence, and finally to regret. The first roommate goes from elation to remembrance and then also to regret.

- Students retell complex listening or viewing experiences.
- Students view a film or videotape dialogue several times. A replay follows, with the sound turned off. Students in pairs provide the dialogue in their own words and ways. Or they might, if capable, tell each other in indirect discourse what is transpiring.
- Students use material from any of the several self-realization or values clarification textbooks for foreign language classes. The material may need adapting if it was written for teacher use.
- Students describe their favorite place to their partners. They might add what they do there and why it is so appealing.
- Students are in a situation in any type of store or other possible location. The directions suggest open-ended conversational tasks; for example:

> You are in a store. You want to buy a close friend a present. You have no ideas. Your partner is the salesperson. He or she tries to be helpful and suggests various things to which you react. Interact for at least five minutes before making a decision. Bring out as many cultural features or differences as you can.

- The teacher primes the students during the preliminary stages with common set phrases to use throughout any conversational practice: "Can you believe it?" "You're pulling my leg!" "It's my feeling that . . ." "If I were you, . . ." "As far as I know, . . ." "What did you expect?" "You can say that again!" Students make frequent use of these phrases.
- Students take the roles of boyfriend and girlfriend. They are taking a walk and commenting on what they see. The conversation turns to more serious matters; e.g., whether or not to continue seeing one another.
- Students engage in critical discussions of books, newspapers, magazines, films, or television shows.
- Students engage in discussions about political and current affairs.
- Students hold debates and conduct meetings.
- Students report on meetings attended.
- Students are given tasks that simulate the role of an interpreter from the United Nations or of an interpreter in another situation.
- Students discuss a public or private person known to both. They might even try to give some sort of psychological explanation of the person's more obvious behavioral patterns.
- Students exchange personal philosophies.

For planning communication tasks similar to those given previously, teachers will want to become aware of the latest communication-oriented texts and materials in specific languages, the latest foreign language journals, and functional-notional categories. (See Mary Finocchiaro and Christopher Brumfit, *The Functional-Notional Approach: From Theory to Practice.*[7])

To keep students on task, some teachers use inexpensive cassette recorders at each student station to record communication activities such as those listed previously. One or two of the recordings might then be selected for later playback to the class or group.

Examples of communication activities involving other dimensions of the language are:

- Students who are more advanced use techniques that are used in English and literature classes. Such techniques include discussing the plot, the characters, the style, or the interpretation of meaning. If the reading matter consists of essays, the follow-up activities can consist of critical analyses, personal reactions, debates, panel discussions, or written tasks of many kinds. For additional ideas, the reader might refer to listings in the bibliography and to the *Handbook for Planning an Effective Reading Program.*
- Students listen to a passage in the foreign language. They may ask questions to clarify meanings. During a second listening they take brief notes. They then retell or paraphase the passage in writing.
- Students who are advanced fill out forms typical of the appropriate foreign countries, such as applications for jobs, visas, credit, driver's licenses, or housing, or forms for hotel and school registration or for merchandise orders.
- Students write letters to pen pals abroad or in the class.
- Students write formal letters abroad, requesting posters, travel information, travel brochures, youth hostel information, job application forms, labels and packaging materials for commercial corporations (to create realia), information from schools, catalogues, or information and materials from consulates.
- Students keep a class or personal journal or diary.
- Students publish a class newspaper or magazine.
- Teachers study the *Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program*, published by the California State Department of Education. They then adapt many of the ideas that are applicable to foreign language learning, and they create foreign language writing assignments.

Examples of activities for global education are:

- Students are engaged in a series of language tasks with international environmental concerns as content; for example, acid rain, polluted water and air, nuclear power, pesticides, or famine.
- Students are provided with foreign language tasks based on international cultural and sports events; for example, the Olympics, television programs, cultural exchanges, World Cup matches, student exchange programs, or film festivals.

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[7] Mary Finocchiaro and Christopher Brumfit, *The Functional-Notional Approach: From Theory to Practice.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1983.

Courtesy of Dick Lundin

- Students practice language tasks that include obtaining information about international science projects and cooperation; for example, the International Geophysical Year, the Peace Corps, space programs, exploration of Antarctica, medical research, or awarding of Nobel prizes.
- Students participate in communication tasks that compare pop culture, dating, schools, and family discipline and structure.
- Students perform tasks in which international organizations are featured; for example, the United Nations, the Organization of American States, and the European Union.
- Students prepare reports based on economic interdependence; for example, foreign economies and the U.S. economy, foreign economies and global markets, the U.S. economy and global markets, the European Common Market, immigration patterns, telephone and postal services, airlines, and shipping.
- Students are given tasks that clarify the necessity and the possibility of international cooperation despite diversity, including many of the areas of cooperation mentioned previously.

The Role of Homework

Classroom time is limited. Students progress faster if they perform some learning tasks outside of class time. In a program based on attaining certain levels of communicative proficiency, it would be a great advantage if students all had access to inexpensive cassette players, either owning one or being able to use one in the library or classroom when classes are not in session. In any case homework is a common feature of most school programs. Homework was not listed as one of the basic elements in the instructional sequence since it might well be a continuation of any of the five elements. Examples of tasks that can be assigned as homework are:

- Reading, if sufficient preparation has been given
- Writing, such as writing letters, describing home and family, summarizing reading material, writing the television weather report, and so forth
- Practicing skills by using foreign language computer programs
- Listening, especially listening to extra dialogues, descriptions, anecdotes, advertisements, telephone calls, instructions, or explanations
- Learning and practicing newly introduced vocabulary, orally and in writing
- Learning idioms or formalized interjections and sentence starters
- Performing recorded guided practice tasks in which the language response is fairly fixed and can be provided as a self-check
- Performing grammar and structure drills considered useful
- Becoming more familiar with language experienced in class (listening, reading, writing, or producing orally)
- Reviewing and preparing for evaluation
- Practicing communication with peers or native speakers, in person

> *"Never be afraid to speak because you fear to express your ideas rather awkwardly. Every time you give utterance to strange sounds adds to your knowledge of pronunciation, and lessens your bashfulness, by giving you increased confidence in yourself."*
>
> F. BUTLER, *The Spanish Teacher*, 1845.

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or over the phone (This activity can be shared later with the class.)
- Receiving foreign language programs on radio, television, or in movie theaters for extra practice
- Listening to foreign language songs and memorizing the lyrics of favorites

Students should not be assigned tasks for homework that normally require a lot of teacher monitoring.

Having the foreign language department design a model form for giving homework assignments is an effective approach. The form should provide for at least three elements:

- The objective to be reached (stated in performance terms)
- The material to be used; for example, text, handout, cassette, drawing, notes, and so forth
- The directions or strategy for carrying out the assignment

Either the learning objective or the directions should clarify how the student will know when the task has been successfully completed. Students should expect that homework will be evaluated.

Photo by Media Services, California State Department of Education

3

Implementing a Foreign Language Program

To implement an effective communication-based foreign language program involves reviewing the philosophy and purpose, choosing major objectives, selecting the language and materials, establishing short-term instructional objectives, and implementing the new or revised plan.

Presenting an Overview

The starting point for developing a new or revised foreign language program should be an assessment of what the learner needs to be able to do. Those charged with implementing an effective communication-based program must ascertain the needs of both society and the individual. Central to the group's deliberations is this question: "What does the learner need and want to achieve through the foreign language?" There should be a needs analysis or survey, for a communication-based program leads to the communicative events in which the learners will participate. These events, in turn, will lead to the selection of the grammatical structures necessary. A focus on communicative competence does not eliminate the need for the ability to manipulate grammatical structures. Grammar is simply given a supportive role in a program that emphasizes teaching for communication.

The needs assessment, or an evaluation of the present foreign language program, leads to plans for changes. In most schools or school districts, implementing an effective communication-based foreign language program may consist mainly of upgrading a program already in existence. This process might also include adding new languages to the curriculum. The philosophy, goals, and objectives may need revision. Any changes in these three categories may, in turn, require in-service training for the staff. Changes may also require revising or adapting the present learning materials or acquiring new materials. The curriculum or course outlines may need rewriting. Testing and evaluation procedures may need redesigning.

The group charged with the responsibility for upgrading or implementing the foreign language program can include school administrators, foreign language teachers, school trustees, students, and community representatives of parents, businesses, and other interested groups. Group members should be aware of the many other factors that could affect their actions:

- District policies, philosophy, and goals
- Availability of appropriate commercial materials for the goals established
- The latest electronic technology
- Local administrative policy and procedures
- The capabilities of the local foreign language staff
- State school codes and policies, state guidelines, and state model curricula
- National foreign language needs
- Local community opinion and desires
- Economic feasibility of implementing any proposed changes
- College and university expectations in foreign languages
- School accreditation standards

Courtesy of Sam Clemens

- Objectives measured by standardized tests, especially college entrance exams
- Educational theories and research concerning foreign language learning
- Educational theories and research concerning the sociology and psychology of learning in general
- The nature and needs of the local learners

Reviewing the Philosophy

In education a *philosophy* has come to mean something akin to ultimate purpose, main goal, terminal objective, or raison d'etre. Such a philosophy provides a reference point by which teachers guide the learning process and toward which they direct the learning activities. The learning activities are evaluated as desirable or not according to how well they contribute toward a realization of the main goal.

A philosophy is usually seen as a system of values. Many secondary goals exist, and these are inseparable from the main goal, especially if the main goal is the ability to communicate effectively in the language. Included in the secondary goals are gaining an understanding of the cultural setting in which the language is native; acquiring skill in employing the grammatical structures necessary to carrying out the chosen communicative functions; learning a selected lexical content; gaining a cross-cultural perspective and insights into one's own culture; and developing rhetorical, reading, and writing skills and positive attitudes toward the language and its native speakers.

A consensus exists among foreign language professionals, in the body politic, among students and parents, and among educators in general that the main goal of foreign language learning should be the ability to demonstrate practical, meaningful use of the language. In the "Point of View Statement for Modern Foreign Language Instruction," the second recommendation states that "Communication in the foreign language should be the major objective and the dominant activity in foreign language classrooms." The 1984 edition of the ACTFL Foreign Language Education Series is entitled *Teaching for Proficiency, the Organizing Principle*[1]. According to the California State Board of Education in *Raising Expectations: Model Graduation Requirements* (p. 27): "The purpose of the course is to enable the student to communicate in a language other than English . . . . "

In any case the planning group will want to start by establishing its philosophy. The group might merely revise what is already in effect, write its own concepts from scratch, or review the philosophies of other schools, and from them choose ideas or even a complete philosophy. An attitude survey in the school and community might be part of the recommendations.

Choosing Major Objectives

Once the major outcome of the foreign language program is agreed on, more specific objectives should be set. For

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[1] *Teaching for Proficiency, the Organizing Principle.* Edited by Theodore H. Higgs. Lincolnwood, Ill.: National Textbook Company, 1984.

"A translation is no translation, he said, unless it will give you the music of a poem along with the words in it."

JOHN MILLINGTON SYNGE,
The Aran Islands, 1907.

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instance, if the major goal states that students should be able to use the language for communication and interaction with members of the native culture, then deciding what skills or functions to include is necessary. Many school curriculum guides have such statements as: "By the end of the first year, the student will be able to use 500 vocabulary words in Spanish; will be able to conjugate *-ar*, *-er*, and *-ir* verbs in the present tense; will have mastered the phonic system; can handle direct and indirect object pronouns; and so forth."

Such objectives, of course, do not guarantee any ability to communicate. They do not present the subject in usable form. If the goal of the program or course is to produce students who can actually communicate in the language, then *the objectives must be stated in terms that specify proficiency in communication*—not achievement in grammar, phonetics, reading comprehension, vocabulary, and so forth.

A communication-based program specifies what people should be able to do in the foreign language and what linguistic functions they should be able to carry out, with regard to a specific content. Deciding which functions and content are most necessary will also determine which linguistic forms or grammar, vocabulary, and idioms should also be learned.

As an example, it might be determined that from a list of functions, such as commanding, persuading, threatening, and apologizing, the last item was deemed important for the learner to be able to do. A further determination might be that the learner should be able to apologize for *being late*, for being late *to work*, and for being late for work *yesterday*. The learner will need to acquire the ability to use the common expressions for employing the *function* of apologizing; will need to know the particular content or *notions* for this situation—lateness, work, yesterday, and so forth; and the learner will need to be able to operate with the proper forms or grammar—in this specific instance, the past tense.

When particular functions are chosen as the most necessary ones for learners to possess, the functions have to be sequenced by those developing a foreign language course or courses. The course will consist of a series of functions; a related body of content, notions, or vocabulary; the necessary grammatical structures for carrying out the communicative functions with the content; and the cultural settings, rules, and features involved.

In developing the specific courses, a district's or school's program planners can rely on several resources: the staff and its experiences, the textbooks to be used, the *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve*, "ACTFL Provisional Proficiency Guidelines," the California Foreign Language Competency Statement of the Foreign Language Liaison Committee, and the Council of Europe's "Unit/ Credit System," with its Waystage, Threshold, and more advanced levels.

These systems attempt to define what it is a learner should be able to do in the language at various levels, from beginning stages to advanced stages. This then determines the learner's proficiency level according to a scale containing such designations as novice, intermediate,

"Speak the language of the company that you are in; speak it purely, and unlarded with any other."

LORD CHESTERFIELD, *Letters*, 22 Feb., 1748.

advanced, superior; or perhaps levels 1, 2, 3, 4, and so forth. These levels are usually defined for at least listening, reading, speaking, writing, and cultural skills.

Proficiency levels are described for quite large advances in students' communicative abilities, corresponding usually to what might be accomplished in one or more courses. Therefore, schools must indicate smaller units of language achievement or performance, corresponding to specific short-term objectives. A student's skill with these objectives can serve as the basis for reporting interim stages of progress toward a particular level of proficiency.

The following are examples of some communication objectives (arranged from beginning-level difficulty to more advanced levels of difficulty). The students will be able to:

- Use the common forms of greeting in everyday types of formal and informal situations.
- Answer basic questions about themselves.
- Ask questions and make requests in simple survival situations: eating, traveling, obtaining shelter, getting medical care, or asking directions.
- Describe and ask questions about visual material that is familiar.
- Converse with a fluent speaker about familiar, everyday situations.
- Converse with a native about familiar topics, interrupt politely, and clarify misunderstandings.
- Express feelings of surprise and shock during a conversation.
- Be assertive and place blame.
- Relate events that happened in the past; for example, summarizing the plot of a movie or describing what happened at school.
- Converse with fluency and confidence in most social situations, including talking about current events.
- Discuss interests and beliefs or express opinions and criticism—all without long pauses or very noticeable groping for vocabulary and with only occasional errors in structure or grammar.
- Read anything that can be comprehended orally.
- Read and write at the fourth year level of the *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve,* the advanced level as described in the *ACTFL Provisional Proficiency Guidelines,*[2] or level 4 of the *Foreign Language Competency Statement.*[3]

Comprehension objectives for listening, reading, speaking, and writing will most likely be included. Cultural objectives will be integrated with most of the language objectives. Gestures and voice intonation are also part of accurate communication.

The local group may want to create its own list of major goals and objectives, or it may want to select from lists already in existence.

Selecting Languages and Materials

Expanding an established foreign language program, or beginning a new

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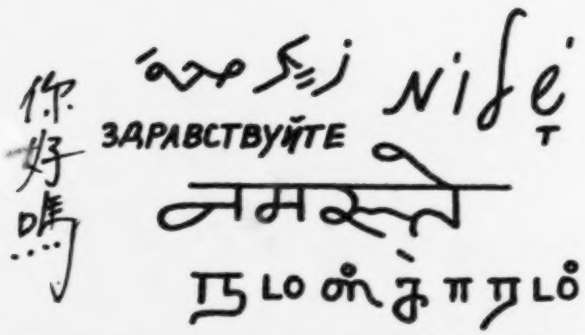
[2] *ACTFL Provisional Proficiency Guidelines.* New York: American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 1982.

[3] *Foreign Language Competency Statement. A Project of the California Roundtable for Educational Opportunity.* Fullerton: Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, California State University, Fullerton, 1984.



one, provides an opportunity for looking at language selection from a new perspective. Are the traditional language choices necessarily the most useful? The selection of textbooks and materials to support a program also provides an opportunity for renewal. The instructional materials influence strongly what will be taught—and how it will be taught.

Selection of Languages

In choosing which languages to include in a new program or which languages to add to an established program, one may consider several approaches. A local survey of students' and citizens' needs or preferences can be made. If a questionnaire is used, it should contain a list of possible language offerings. Industry, commerce, and governments here and abroad can be consulted to ascertain the needs in these areas. The usefulness of Spanish in California is obvious. A need may also be obvious for people proficient in Asian and Arabic languages, for instance.

Students preparing to enter colleges and universities have certain foreign language needs. The planning group will want to be aware of college recommendations for specific foreign languages in the more common majors.

Latin should be considered for inclusion in foreign language programs. However, its selection may require a special set of goals and objectives that differ from those for the study of modern languages. Studying Latin is valuable because 70 percent of formal English and 90 percent of Spanish are based on Latin. A knowledge of Latin improves one's English reading vocabulary comprehension and increases one's recognition of Romance language vocabulary. The emphasis on goals and objectives for learning Latin might be on reading and translation skills, but many strategies appropriate to modern language teaching can be successfully used in Latin instruction.

Language program planners might consider these modern languages whose speakers number over 100 million:[4]

Language	*Number of speakers (in millions)*
Mandarin	740
Russian	277
Spanish	266
Hindi	264
Arabic	160
Bengali	155
Portuguese	154
Japanese	120
Malay-Indonesian	119
German	118
French	109

Many other modern languages may prove valuable because of local ethnic communities or business connections. Some of the more common are Armenian, Dutch, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Italian, Korean, Norwegian, Persian, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, Swahili, Swedish, and Vietnamese.

Selection of Materials

Textbooks and instructional materials for foreign language, as in other subjects, determine to a great extent what teachers teach and students learn. For that reason, these materials should reflect the

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[4] The source for this chart is *The World Almanac and Book of Facts 1984*, New York: Newspaper Enterprise Association, Inc., 1983, p. 195.

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philosophy, goals, and objectives of the foreign language program. A textbook organized around grammar, and which contains mainly grammar drills, will not be well-suited for a proficiency-based program of communication. Available learning materials should be carefully reviewed. Some features to look for are:

- The materials provide authentic, natural language as it is used in the cultures where the language is spoken.
- The objectives stated by the authors for the materials match as closely as possible the foreign language objectives of the school or district.
- Any drills, exercises, and tasks involve or lead quickly to communication activities.
- Written matter is supplemented by recordings providing a variety of good models, listening comprehension materials, stimuli for conversational activities, and cultural features.
- Visuals are available or included that lend impact, heighten interest, support motivation efforts, and present certain cultural characteristics.
- Teachers' editions or manuals contain clear directions for using the text and its components. Model units and lesson plans are available as well as teaching hints and aids. Suggestions for using the materials for small-group activities are helpful. The manual ought to contain evaluation instruments based on language proficiency or on objectives leading to such proficiency.
- The level of language and language learning activities is appropriate for the age levels of the students.
- The materials are suitable or adaptable to individualized, small-group, or independent learning. This situation requires clearly stated objectives for each lesson and student-oriented directions for carrying out the sequence of learning activities.
- The date of publication is provided.

Teachers sometimes must use a text not too well suited to the program goals and objectives. Such a text can be adapted to fit the learners' needs. Teachers desiring extra practice material can also adapt material from any texts or other materials on hand. A procedure for adapting materials follows:

- Select or refer to the instructional objective for the lesson or unit.
- Select sentences or passages from the texts that employ the essential structure and vocabulary to be emphasized, modeled, or practiced. Concentrate on functions that are relevant but not specific to a situation; that is, functions that can be used as broadly as possible.
- Edit, if necessary. Vocabulary and tenses can be changed, and unnecessarily difficult or infrequent structures can be eliminated.
- Arrange the sentences or vocabulary so that they convey a real message through any forms being learned.
- Put the language in a format appropriate for use by the teacher or students. The teacher may need to duplicate the material as handouts, record it, and so forth.
- Apply the materials to the proper stages in the learning sequence.

Even fairly conventional grammar-based textbooks can be adapted for use in a communication-based program. The first step is to decide which communicative functions students need to perform. Then a list of the structures and grammar necessary for carrying out these functions is compiled. The teacher might then order these functions roughly parallel to the order of the presentation of grammar in the textbook. Communication tasks are then formed around the structures, and entire lesson sequences are planned. (See, for instance, the practical booklet about such adapting techniques by Gail Guntermann and June K. Phillips, *Functional-Notional Concepts: Adapting the Foreign Language Textbook*[5].)

Establishing Short-Term Instructional Objectives

When the textbooks and other materials have been selected and the major goals and objectives have been agreed on, short-term objectives can be fixed. Many of these objectives may be based on subject matter and activities in the text. They should be in harmony with the major goals and objectives of the overall program.

The planning group will probably not want to be concerned with daily or weekly objectives. Formulating these objectives is usually a task for the individual teacher. The teacher is the only one who knows the strengths, needs, and interests of the particular class. The teacher also plans most of the learning strategy for reaching the objectives, although the course outlines may contain suggestions toward this end.

The short-term objectives referred to previously are the expected outcomes of lessons or units of work. Examples of such objectives are:

- Students will be able to count to 100 and to read aloud the prices of items shown in a catalogue.
- Students will be able to list 20 adjectives, including the learned colors, which describe the numbered items in a given picture.
- Students will be able to comprehend a simple chain of related events (containing familiar vocabulary) told in the present tense and to retell the same chain of events to the teacher or a partner in the narrative past tense.
- Students will be able to interact with a partner readily in any simulated social situation requiring the types of greetings, introductions, and comments about the terms for weather learned and practiced in the textbook.
- Students will be able to ask any questions necessary to elicit all the personal information found in the tasks in the textbook.
- Given any of the topics forming the content of this unit, students will be able to state their position on the topic and to defend it for five minutes. The performance must be such that a native speaker would understand it, although the students might make errors.

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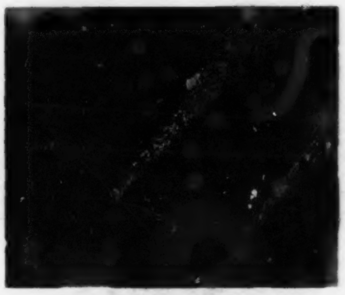
[5] Gail Guntermann and June K. Phillips, *Functional-Notional Concepts: Adapting the Foreign Language Textbook*. Language in Education: Theory and Practice, No. 44. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1982.



Courtesy of Robert R. Alvarez

Implementing the New or Revised Plan

After completing the preceding steps, the planning group is ready to formulate a recommendation for implementing the new foreign language program or for recommending changes in the present program. Local districts may have procedures and forms already established for accomplishing this.

The group may want to include in its recommendations a special plea for ensuring that any proficiency gained by students is maintained. Lapses of a semester or a year in foreign language use must not occur because of scheduling conflicts. If time and other requirements preclude a third or a fourth year of the foreign language, alternative scheduling arrangements are possible. For example, foreign language and chemistry could be alternated every day for two years, rather than each subject being scheduled every day for one year each. Other arrangements can be explored, such as teaching a subject in the foreign language, independent study, extended day classes, or summer programs.

In any case at least the following considerations and information should be included in the overall plan for implementation:

- The languages and the courses that will be affected
- The goals and rationale for any change
- The costs of any materials, release time, added staff, classroom equipment, or renovation
- Articulation plans with any feeder schools or higher level schools
- Any expected scheduling problems
- Methods of student and program evaluation

When a final recommendation is accepted by whoever has the authority, course outlines or a curriculum guide should be written or rewritten to reflect any new decisions.

Many schools provide a handbook with suggested learning activities, sample lesson plans, sources for teaching ideas, reproducible handouts and tasks, and successful ideas from various teachers. The teachers then follow the course outline in planning their daily or weekly objectives, their teaching and learning strategies, and their evaluation of the students and the effectiveness of the course or program.

4 Providing for Effective Foreign Language Staff Development

It is essential to provide for staff development in a communication-based foreign language program. Teachers can improve their skills through programs and activities they develop themselves and through support and training the school district provides.

An Overview for Planning

Staff development is the key to upgrading foreign language programs. This is especially true if communicative proficiency becomes the principal goal of the program. An old maxim asserts that teachers tend to teach as they were taught rather than as they were taught to teach. They also tend to teach according to their own preferred method of learning.

Most present-day foreign language teachers did not have the opportunity to learn their foreign languages in classrooms that provided proficiency-based instruction. In fact, they were not often taught to teach in such classrooms either. Most teachers would like to teach toward, and through, communication in the classroom. But they want to be convinced that this process can be done successfully, and they may need extensive in-service training to learn how to teach effectively in a communication-based program.

Upgrading the teaching staff is a twofold responsibility. Teachers have a responsibility to the students and to the commmunity that employs them. They are obligated to perform as effectively as possible. The school or district also has responsiblities in this regard. To provide more effective instruction, administrators must support the teacher and provide local opportunities for teachers to be trained or retrained.

Teachers Helping Themselves

As part of their classroom instruction, effective foreign language teachers do the following:

- Realize that teaching is an art that is forever changing and evolving. These teachers realize that, as artists, they themselves should be forever changing, evolving, and gaining new perspectives.
- Improve continually a facility with and knowledge of the language and cultures taught. Whenever possible, teachers participate in foreign study programs or appropriate summer seminars in the United States. They seek out families whose native culture and language provide new concepts and practice, or they travel to a country where the language is used.
- Exhibit enthusiasm for the language and culture and constantly assess students' attitudes to plan motivational activities and presentations.
- Know the students' interests, learning styles, and goals, and plan lesson presentations, practice, and conversational activities that capitalize on this knowledge about the students.
- Know the various methods employed by language teachers, and choose techniques judiciously from whatever methods offer ideas that will help the students reach the program objectives and that are clear about the difference between means and ends.

"Language is the memory of the human race. It is as a thread or nerve of life running through all the ages, connecting them into one common, prolonged and advancing existence."

WILLIAM SMITH, *Thorndale.* Pt. i, sec. 11.

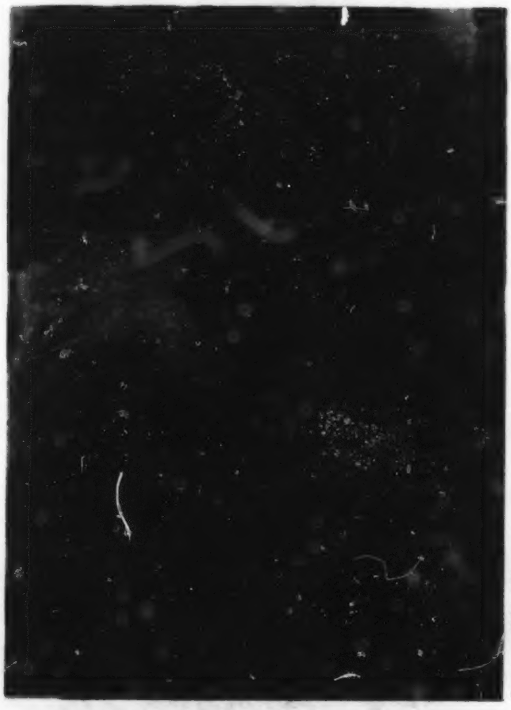
- Are well acquainted with learning delivery systems and the various classroom arrangements possible; use presentations, textbooks, supplementary materials, electronic apparatus, realia, peer interaction, large groups, small groups, student pairs, independent study, and homework assignments whenever and as often as deemed best for reaching the desired learning outcomes.
- Are familiar with the latest research in foreign language teaching, read professional journals, and attend conferences where successful ideas are presented.
- Assess learning results and learner attitudes honestly; do not hesitate to revise the teaching or learning plan when the expected results are not attained; and do not hesitate in trying to change the local program or objectives if they seem to be truly unrealistic.
- Keep the overall philosophy and major objectives in mind when teaching and planning; use the textbook wisely, not slavishly and uncritically, to reach objectives; and plan to keep students working toward the objectives for the maximum amount of time possible.

Schools and Districts Helping the Teacher

Effective schools and school districts do the following to achieve a successful foreign language program:

- Support the foreign language program with an adequate share of the available finances.
- Make certain that scheduling and counseling practices do not negatively affect foreign language enrollment.
- Provide in-service training activities for foreign language teachers. Such activities are designed specifically to give the teachers the latest knowledge and skills they need for carrying out the district's program successfully.
- Review frequently the foreign language program by assessing its results. The assessment or evaluation is based on the local district's own stated objectives. The district staff and the teachers then analyze in good faith the reasons for any shortcomings, and they decide what changes need to be made.
- Provide opportunities for informal gatherings of the foreign language staff, sometimes together with the foreign language staffs of neighboring schools or districts, to stimulate idea exchanges.
- Seek available services provided by county, state, national, professional, commercial, and foreign sources.
- Institute major changes in curriculum by involving and, when necessary, properly training teachers.
- Allow opportunities to experiment with the latest research findings.
- Provide foreign language teachers with the help available from mentor teachers.
- Create a nonthreatening environment in which teachers apply newly acquired skills in their own classrooms and receive feedback from trusted colleagues on the success of the new approach.

- Arrange teacher-led seminars whenever teachers are discovered obtaining very successful results with innovative approaches or activities.
- Have a hiring policy designed to add only the best new teachers to the staff. Part of this policy includes interviews of candidates, observations in the classroom setting, a review of foreign language proficiency, and the establishment of foreign language proficiency standards for new teachers.
- Provide structured opportunities for interaction among foreign language staff and teachers of other subjects to explore the possibilities of interdisciplinary studies and team teaching.



Courtesy of Sam Clemens

5 Assessing a School's Foreign Language Program

An assessment of a school's foreign language program is essential for determining the program's effectiveness. The checklist in this chapter contains guidelines to determine a program's strengths and weaknesses. After the checklist has been completed, one can plan follow-up procedures to improve the areas of the programs where weaknesses appear.

Using the Checklist

The checklist in this chapter is a distillation of the effective foreign language program features presented in the previous four chapters. Each item in the checklist should stimulate recall of an entire concept from the body of the handbook. Therefore, the checklist is not meant to be used without reference to, or study of, the material from which it was derived.

In addition, users of this checklist should read the *Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools*, the "Point of View Statement for Modern Foreign Language Instruction," and the *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve*, and any of the resources that seem applicable listed in the "Selected References" section.

The purpose of the checklist is to discover the strengths and weaknesses of a local foreign language program. This device is meant to be a beneficial medium for local planners to use in stimulating constant, positive growth in their foreign language programs. The rating categories are defined as follows:

- Ineffective: The listed feature is either entirely lacking, or it is producing no results.
- Somewhat effective: The local program does incorporate this feature, but it is not accomplishing fully the desired results.
- Effective: The local program is doing a quite satisfactory job here, but there are ways for doing even better.
- Very effective: The local program is doing an outstanding job in providing the opportunities or features so rated.

Planning Follow-up Procedures

After the staff has marked the checklist as objectively as possible, a summary of the results can prove helpful in planning follow-up procedures to upgrade the program. A suggested format follows:

1. The checklist shows that our program is very effective in the following areas:
   a.
   b.
   c.
2. The checklist shows that we need to work to become more effective in the following areas during the coming year:
   a.
   b.
   c.

3. The checklist shows that we lack the following aspects of a completely effective foreign language program:
   a.
   b.
   c.

4. We have the following specific plans for improving the effectiveness of our program:
   a.
   b.
   c.

Checklist

for Assessing a School's Foreign Language Program

This checklist contains criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of the foreign language program components presented in each chapter in this publication. A definition of the rating categories appeared previously in this chapter.

1 Introducing an Effective Program

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. Communication is the main goal of foreign language learning?
2. Grammar and other components of language learning are viewed not as ends in themselves, but clearly as a means to enhance the students' ability to communicate in the language?
3. Students' needs and expectations for being able to communicate in the language are taken into account by those who plan and teach foreign language courses?
4. A clearly stated plan or curriculum outline exists for the foreign language program and each course in it?
5. The foreign language staff has read and discussed the contents and implications of this handbook, the *Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools*, the "Point of View Statement for Modern Foreign Language Instruction," and *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve.*

2 Learning Foreign Languages

A. Overview of Foreign Language Instruction

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. Efforts are made to determine students' most effective learning modes (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and so forth) and to use these modes when instruction is being planned?
2. Teachers have flexibility in choosing the instructional methods—but are accountable for achieving program objectives?

B. Aspects of Communication

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. Students perform many interesting tasks involving real or realistic communication?
2. Time spent in class prior to communication activities is minimized?
3. Students assimilate new language material first through sufficient time spent listening to or reading the language?
4. Students' reading tasks include intensive and extensive reading. Reading instruction includes the various processing skills listed in "Receptive Skills for Learning Languages" on page 9 of this handbook?
5. Students listen to and read the language before spontaneously using it to speak and write.
6. Appropriate comprehensible responses are acceptable, especially at beginning levels: single words, short phrases, incomplete sentences, or utterances with grammatical errors?
7. Communicative language tasks are organized around frequently used language functions that have broad application in many situations?
8. Writing tasks are mainly communicative in nature and include practice with the appropriate writing conventions for the target language?
9. Proficiency is clearly the objective of foreign language listening, speaking, reading, writing, and cultural instruction and activities in the classroom?
10. Teachers have received instruction and training in assessment of students' proficiency?

11. Communicative situations are designed to give students practice with most of the common cultural features of the language and people?
12. Objectives regarding personal tolerance of cultural differences and appreciation of diversity are included in the program?
13. Objectives and activities incorporating many global education topics are an integral part of the foreign language program?
14. The foreign language program includes objectives for students designed to develop constructive perceptions of the world as a system and to decrease ethnocentric and stereotypical perceptions?

C. An Effective Instructional Sequence for Students

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. Teachers are offered training in effective classroom procedures, such as the California Effective Classrooms Training (ECT) Program, or they are at least made familiar with such concepts?
2. Instruction is based on the ECT sequence or a similar research-based sequence?
3. Teachers are able to manage small-group activities?

Element One: Setting the Stage

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. Lesson objectives are clear to the students?
2. Students know why and how they will be carrying out a particular learning task?
3. Students' desire to reach each lesson's objective is stimulated?
4. Classrooms are visually exciting and reflect the language and culture?
5. Guests from abroad and social studies teachers are invited to make presentations?

Element Two: Providing Input

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. Language models are presented in great variety?
2. Classroom instructions and language explanations are given in the foreign language as soon as possible?

3. Pretests are used to group heterogeneous students?
4. A variety of materials is available for teachers and students to use?
5. A library or collection of realia is maintained and used?
6. The introduction of new language content and functions is accompanied by a variety of visuals?

Element Three: Providing Guided Practice

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. Realistic, relevant, and interesting language is the basis of all practice?
2. Practice activities are varied to prevent the students' responses from becoming mechanical?
3. Stereotyped sentence openers ("gambits") and interjections are included in models and practice?
4. Textbook exercises are adapted to serve a course's goals and objectives better whenever necessary?
5. Visuals are used to emphasize content and culture and to aid memory?
6. Students are aware that grammatical forms are a means to conveying a clear message?
7. Teachers are aware that any guided practice prior to communication should be brief and that practice should then be continued through communication tasks?

Element Four: Providing Evaluation

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. The results of students' practice under a teacher's supervision are frequently monitored to determine whether students are ready for more communication activities?
2. Grammatical perfection is not a necessary prerequisite for communication experiences, nor a necessary outcome of practice?
3. A variety of additional activities for students who are slow to reach short-term objectives is provided?
4. The evaluation mode matches the objective; e.g., alternatives to written tests are provided to determine students' oral proficiency and so forth?
5. Teachers are familiar with the various oral proficiency testing devices available?

Element Five: Providing Application and Extension of Instruction

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. Students are made aware of the extent of their progress after each lesson or unit?
2. Cultural features are integrated into all stages of language presentation and practice?
3. A collection of tasks for communication practice is available to use?
4. At least half of the class time is devoted to communication activities in the foreign language?
5. A communication-based system of evaluation is used rather than a grammar-based system?
6. Students use sources of foreign language experience in the local community as an extension of classroom experiences?
7. Cocurricular activities for foreign language students are provided and encouraged? (See page 20 of the *Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve.)*

D. The Role of Homework

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. Students have access to audiovisual equipment outside class time (in the classroom, library, media center, or, for some, at home)?
2. Homework assignments are based on a foreign language department model, with objectives and directions included?
3. Some assignments are given requiring participation in foreign language experiences other than classroom kinds of learning, such as television shows, telephone calls, movies, and so forth?

3 Implementing Foreign Language Programs

A. Presenting an Overview

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. A needs assessment is made periodically?
2. A policy exists concerning the composition of the group charged with the responsibility for curriculum change?
3. In-service training is given to the planning group?

B. Reviewing the Philosophy

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. A unifying philosophy for the foreign language program exists?
2. Secondary goals are clearly established as contributing factors to the main goal?
3. Recommendations are obtained from the whole school and community before final goals are set?

C. Choosing Major Objectives

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. Major objectives are stated in terms of what students can do with the language?
2. Major objectives are regarded as stages along the way to the main goal of the foreign language program?
3. A scale of proficiency levels and of interim short-term communication objectives is established?
4. Reading and writing objectives are established, as well as oral objectives?
5. Cultural objectives are included with each level of speaking, listening, reading, and writing objectives?

D. Selecting Languages and Materials

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. A reevaluation of the languages offered occurs at times?
2. An up-to-date priority list of languages to be added exists, based on recommendations from many resources?
3. Currently used textbooks have been evaluated in the light of local philosophy and goals?
4. Available commercial materials are evaluated periodically?
5. In-service training sessions are held periodically to exchange ideas or create materials or to adapt currently used texts for communication activities, if necessary?

E. Establishing Short-Term Instructional Objectives

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. Units of work contain a clear objective leading to a major proficiency level?

2. Teachers have model lesson plans to use for organizing daily or weekly instruction?
3. Communication-based evaluation suggestions are provided for use after units of instruction have been completed?

F. Implementing the New or Revised Plan

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. A channel exists through which recommendations for change can be forwarded?
2. A format is established in which recommendations for change are cast?
3. An alternative scheduling plan exists to help students with scheduling conflicts maintain acquired skills?
4. Articulation meetings are held with feeder or higher level schools on a regular basis, but especially if changes in the program are contemplated?
5. Evaluation procedures are established for assessing the effectiveness of the foreign language program?
6. Course outlines exist for teachers and administrators to use?

4 Providing for Effective Foreign Language Staff Development

A. An Overview for Planning

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. In-service training is a continuing feature of the foreign language program?
2. Teachers have received training in employing many realistic communicative activities in the classroom?

B. Teachers Helping Themselves

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. Teachers who improve their language or teaching proficiency by going abroad or by taking courses receive recognition or incentives?
2. Teachers are encouraged to tailor instruction to students' interests and learning styles?

Providing for Effective Foreign Language Staff Development—Continued

3. Teachers who improve student proficiency by employing new ideas and so forth are commended and given some positive evaluation?
4. Teachers remaining professionally current are commended and given positive evaluation?
5. Teachers who consistently bring students to high levels of proficiency are commended and given positive evaluations?

C. Schools and Districts Helping the Teacher

How effectively does the foreign language program ensure that:

1. An adequate share of available finances is provided for foreign language programs?
2. Scheduling and counseling practices do not negatively affect the foreign language program?
3. In-service programs of many kinds exist for foreign language teachers?
4. Teacher and program assessments are based on proficiency results, that is, how well students can actually perform communication tasks?
5. Students and teachers have access to services provided by county, state, national, professional, commercial, and foreign sources?
6. The entire foreign language staff participates when major changes are contemplated?
7. Opportunity is provided for some experimentation with promising innovative ideas?
8. The foreign language department has a fair share of any available services of aides, secretaries, or master teachers?
9. The school's hiring policy includes significant criteria and interviewing by staff who are knowledgeable about foreign language instruction?

Selected References

Listed below are a few of the many books and articles that have appeared recently about foreign language education. These selected references will serve the teacher who wants a basic reading list to accompany the content of this handbook.

For a much more inclusive list, the Foreign Language Education Series published by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) is recommended. A volume in this series is published annually. Each chapter in each volume contains an extensive bibliography. The series itself is indispensable for the foreign language teacher who wishes to be aware of current ideas, research, and publications.

Also available from ACTFL is a "Selected Topical Bibliography of Proficiency-Related Issues." This list of references covers such proficiency-related issues as oral proficiency testing, proficiency in the other modalities, and implications and applications of the proficiency concept.

To obtain information about or copies of the ACTFL Foreign Language Education Series, publications from ACTFL listed in this appendix, or the "Selected Topical Bibliography of Proficiency-Related Issues," one should write to the ACTFL Materials Center, P.O. Box 408, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10706.

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"What is lofty can be said in any language, and what is mean should be said in none."
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